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SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

The University of Oxford

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SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

The University of Oxford

FIRST SERIES

1859—1868

BY

H. P. LIDDON, D.D.

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SEVENTH EDITION

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Das eigentliche, einzige und tiefste Thema der Welt- und Menschengeschichte, dem alle übrigen untergeordnet sind, bleibt der Conflict des Unglaubens und Glaubens.—GOETHE.

Dies venit, dies Tua
In quâ reflorent omnia :
Lætemur et nos in viam
Tuâ reducti dexterâ.—HYMN. SÆC. XMI.

TO

THE REV. WILLIAM BRIGHT, M.A.

SENIOR FELLOW AND TUTOR OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,

IN AFFECTIONATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF THE MANY BLESSINGS

WHICH ARE INSEPARABLY CONNECTED WITH

HIS FRIENDSHIP AND EXAMPLE.

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PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE Sermons contained in this volume have little in common with each other beyond a certain apologetic character, such as is suggested by the title[a]. At one time the writer had intended to employ the opportunities afforded to him during the course of the last two years, in an attempt to show that some prominent ideas, which, in their application to secular and material interests, form the strength and staple of the system or complexion of thought vaguely described as "Liberalism," are originally traceable, directly or indirectly, to a Christian source, and are realized by none so completely as by the faithful children of the Church. This intention is here alluded to, in the hope that some one else may be led to consider the subject, and, if expedient, to discuss it in the University pulpit or elsewhere. The Sermons which stand as second and third in this publica-

[a] "Some Words for God," prefixed to the First Edition.

tion are a partial, but only a partial attempt to follow it out. The plan of attempting any thing like a course of Sermons was abandoned in deference to what seemed to be a higher duty in a Christian Preacher, that, namely, of dealing as well as he can with such misapprehensions respecting truths of faith or morals as he knows to be actually current among those whom he has to address.

The reader will bear in mind that this is a volume of Sermons. It makes no pretension to be a volume of Essays. An Essay belongs to general literature: a Sermon is the language of the Church. A Sermon is confined within narrow limits; and its necessarily rhetorical character renders an economical use of its scanty opportunities impossible. Each Sermon must suggest many topics which it cannot afford to discuss. And so far are any Sermons in this volume from professing to deal exhaustively with the subjects of which they treat, that they are purposely restricted to those particular points which happened at the time of their delivery to excite interest or to cause difficulties among persons with whom the Preacher was more or less acquainted. Some great omissions will at once occur to every reader. For instance, the real office and capacity of the Moral Sense—as on the

one hand predisposing us to faith in Our Lord, from its perception of the Beauty of His Character, and as being, on the other, itself educated and controlled by the truths which He authoritatively discloses to it—is not entered upon in those Sermons which insist upon the claims of dogmatic truth. Again, the connexion between the Atonement and the Eucharist is not mentioned in the Sermon for Good Friday: although the text of that Sermon might naturally have suggested it, and so precious a truth was by no means forgotten.

Among sources to which the writer owes ideas or illustrations, for which his obligations are not already acknowledged, he desires to mention the Bishop of Oxford, two or three volumes of Félix's *Conférences*, and Schleiermacher's *Predigten*. Of the Sermons themselves two have already appeared in a separate form; and the few alterations which have been made in them before republication are confined to points of taste or expression. One indeed of these was not, strictly speaking, "preached before the University[b]." Moreover, it repeats, to a certain extent, considerations which are urged more fully in two others. But, as it was addressed to an audience consisting for the most part of University men, it may be allowed to

[b] Sermon VII.

appear in this volume. Of the opportunities for preaching those Sermons which did not fall to the writer's turn as Select Preacher, two are due to the kindness of the present Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and three to that of the Dean of Christ Church.

It only remains for the writer to express his fervent hope that by God's grace this volume may be of service to those who have desired its publication, and that, whatever its crudities or minor errors, it may be found to contain nothing inconsistent with simple submission to the mind of Holy Scripture as set forth in the teaching of the Church

CHRIST CHURCH,
Michaelmas, 1865.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THIS volume was originally published under the title "Some Words for God." In the present Edition that title is dropped, as being open to misconstruction, and in deference to the opinion of critics for whose advice and indulgence the writer has every reason to be grateful.

CHRIST CHURCH,
Easter, 1866.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE present Edition contains three additional Sermons which have been preached within the last two years, and published separately. The subjects appear to suggest that one should be inserted as third in the series, and the two others at the end.

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SERMON I.

GOD AND THE SOUL.

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O God, Thou art my God.

IN this short sentence we may study a feature of the soul's higher life, common in a measure to all of God's true servants, but distinguishing some of them beyond the rest, and, among these, in particular, King David. Ewald[a], indeed, would exclude this Psalm from that small number of sixteen in which his arbitrary criticism still consents to recognize the thought and style of the son of Jesse. But scholars, like Delitzsch[b], deem this estimate nothing short of a literary Vandalism which would sacrifice even the certainties of Biblical science to its own morbid dread of a traditional position. The title, "A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah," is in the strictest harmony with the contents of the Psalm itself. The poet is a king, and a fugitive: enemies are on his track, and are bent on his destruction[c]. He is in "a dry and weary land without water[d]," amidst the wild beasts who will, as he predicts, prey

[a] Dichter der A. B. ii. 152.

[b] "Die Ueberschreibung, so gefasst, lichtet den ganzen Ps., dessen David. Abfassung zu läugnen der unwissenschaftlichste überlieferungsfeindliche Vandalismus ist."—*Delitzsch, Psalmen*, i. 465.

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on his conquered foes[e]. He longs after communion with God in Sion, where in past years he has enjoyed revelations of the Divine Presence[f]. All this is suitable to David's circumstances, immediately after the outbreak of Absalom's rebellion; when the king, in his flight from the capital, "passed over the brook Kidron towards the way of the wilderness[g]." And it may be added, that no other period, either in David's life, or in any other life, that no other set of general circumstances, recorded in the history of Israel, so fully satisfies all the conditions under which the Psalmist writes. Moreover, the style and turns of the language, and especially the physiognomy and order of the thought, seem to connect this Psalm with those which are universally ascribed to David. In some expressions, as in that translated, "I will seek Thee," the ideas are remarkably condensed[h] after David's manner. In others, such as "lips of jubilee[i]," there sparkles a vivid beauty which is very characteristic of David. We may observe, too, in this Psalm a connexion of thought rather than a connexion of expression and form. The thoughts succeed each other so rapidly, as almost to produce the effect of a single thought which steadily underlies and interpenetrates the successive variations of language. And the sharp contrast between the last end of the good and of the bad, is here asserted in a tone of intuitive certainty, which seems to rise higher than the faith, strong as it was, of later Psalmists. Here, too, are sentences full of a spiritual light and force which is peculiarly observable in David's Psalms. Mark, as one instance, the extraordinary beauty of the line, "Thy lovingkindness is better than life[k]."

Considerations, such as these, might help to form a decisive impression in favour of the Davidic origin of

[e] ver. 10. [f] ver. 2. [g] 2 Sam. xv. 23.
[h] אֲשַׁחֲרֶךָּ [i] ver. 5. [k] ver. 5.

this Psalm. Even if such considerations did not carry full conviction, it would be obviously unwarrantable to erect a few Psalms, which have much in common, into absolute tests of the style and mind of an author who lived many years, and who wrote under very various circumstances. The constant tradition of the Synagogue and of the Church cannot reasonably be overlooked. And those who believe that the writers of Holy Scripture were supernaturally inspired to write, will be prepared to find in their writings a greater variety and resource of thought and language than would naturally be looked for in a merely human author. Sixteen Psalms can be supposed to represent the spiritual legacy which the Church has inherited from David with as much justice as four of his Epistles can be imagined to contain all that is left to us of the thoughts and words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

The text might form a motto for what is termed, in the modern phrase, "personal religion." No religion, of course, can deserve its name, if it be not personal at bottom, if it do not recognize as its basis the case of the personal soul face to face with the personal God. But, even with a view to the perfection of the individual himself, religion may, nay, it must, embrace other interests besides his own. Each time that, in the earliest creed, we formally profess our belief in God, we also profess our belief in the Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints. For a well-balanced Christian mind, there can be as little danger of a strong sense of his personal relation to the Source of all life issuing in a selfish forgetfulness of others, as there can be of his forgetting what is due to the needs and culture of his own soul, while he "walks about Sion, and marks well her bulwarks, and tells the towers thereof[1]." A man need not lose sight of his

[1] Ps. cxlviii. 12.

solitary spiritual bearing towards God, because he is interested in the progress, the organization, the imperial majesty of the Realm of Christ. It would be as untrue to say that the writer of the "Imitation" was insensible[m] to the needs, whether of the Church, or of humanity at large, as to argue that the authors of the "De Civitate Dei" or the "Ecclesiastical Polity" must have overlooked the sorrows and aspirations of the human soul. This does not preclude the admission that the undue predominance sometimes of public and corporate interests, and sometimes of interests exclusively personal and subjective, may create dangers for individuals, or for particular ages or portions of the Church, against which it is necessary to take precautions.

But at least in David we have a notable example of a sensitive, tender, self-analyzing soul, living in sustained communion with God, while yet deeply sensible of the claims of the civil and religious polity of Israel. David's years, it is needless to say, were spent in devotion to a large and exacting round of public duties. And in this Psalm public misfortunes do but force him back upon the central strength of the life of his spirit. For the time his crown, his palace, his honours, the hearts of his people, the love of his child, whom he loved, as we know, with such passing tenderness, all are forfeited. The Psalmist is alone with God. In his hour of desolation, he looks up from the desert to heaven. "O God," he cries, "Thou art my God." In the original language he does not repeat the word which is translated 'God.' In *Elohim*[n], the true idea of the root is that of awe, while the adjectival

[m] Dean Milman's well-known estimate of this work almost seems to lose sight of its real object, which is, not to insist upon the whole cycle of Christian duties, but to strengthen and intensify, in view of our Lord's example, the sense of our individual relationship to the Father of Spirits. Lat. Christ. vi. p. 484.

[n] אֱלֹהִים

form implies permanency. In *Eli*[o], the second word employed, the etymological idea is that of might, strength. We might paraphrase, "O Thou Ever-awful One, my Strength, or my Strong-God art Thou." But the second word *Eli*, is in itself nothing less than a separate revelation of an entire aspect of the Being of God. It is indeed used as a proper and distinct Name of God. The pronominal suffixes for the second and third persons are, as Gesenius has remarked, never once found with this name *El;* whereas *Eli*, the first person, occurs very frequently in the Psalter alone. Every one will remember it in the words actually uttered by our Lord upon the cross, and which He took from a Syriacized version of Ps. xxii.[p] The word unveils a truth unknown beyond the precincts of revelation. It teaches us that the Almighty and Eternal gives Himself in the fulness of His Being to the soul that seeks Him. Heathenism indeed in its cultus of domestic and local deities, of its Penates, of its θεοὶ ἐπιχωρίοι, bore witness by these superstitions to the deep yearning of the human heart for the individualizing love of a higher power. To know the true God was to know that such a craving was satisfied.

"My God." The word does not represent a human impression, or desire, or conceit, but an aspect, a truth, a necessity of the Divine Nature. Man can indeed give himself by halves; he can bestow a little of his thought, of his heart, of his endeavour, upon his brother man. In other words, man can be imperfect in his acts, as he is imperfect and finite in his nature. But when God, the Perfect Being, loves the creature of His Hand, He cannot thus divide His love. He must perforce love with the whole directness, and strength, and intensity of His Being; for He is God, and therefore incapable of partial and imperfect action. He must give Himself to the

[o] אלי

[p] Ps. xxii. 1.

single soul with as absolute a completeness as if there were no other being besides the soul which He loves. And, on his side, man knows that this gift of Himself by God is thus entire; and in no narrow spirit of ambitious egotism, but as grasping and representing the literal fact, he cries, "My God." Therefore does this single word enter so largely into the composition of Hebrew names. Men loved to dwell upon that wondrous relation of the Creator to their personal life which it so vividly expressed. Therefore when God had "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," we find St. Paul writing to the Galatians as if his own soul, in its solitary anguish, had alone been redeemed by the sacrifice of Calvary: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me[q]."

But here let us observe that there are two causes within the soul which might indispose us for looking more truly and closely at the truth before us.

Of these causes, the first is *moral:* it is the state of unrepented wilful sin. The gravest mischief of sin does not lie in the outward material act, especially when estimated from a merely legal or social point of view. It consists rather in the introduction of a permanent habit or attitude of the will. Of this attitude each outward act of sin is at once the symptom and the aggravation. The foul eruption is less serious in itself than as evidencing the hold which has been laid upon the moral constitution by the invisible disease. The principle and spirit of rebellion has its seat in the will. Thence it penetrates, as the case may be, either into the sphere of thought, or into that of outward actions. But whether it be weakened, or warped, or enslaved, the will which is deliberately tolerant of the presence of sin is necessarily hostile to a sincere assertion

[q] Gal. ii. 20.

no less of the love than of the rights of God. It is averse from Him. It has other ends in view which are so many denials of His supreme claims upon created life. It cowers with involuntary dread at the sound of His voice among the trees of the garden. If the depraved and sinful will, still clinging to its sin, could conceivably attain to a spiritual embrace of the All-Holy God, so intimate, so endearing as is that of the Psalmist; such nearness would be to it nothing less than repulsive; it would be scarcely less than an agony.

The other cause is *intellectual*. It may, without offence, be described as the subjective spirit, which is so characteristic and predominant an influence in the thought of our day. In plain English, this spirit is an intellectual selfishness, which makes man, and not God, the monarch and centre of the world of thought. Man is again to be, as of old with the Greek Sophist, the measure of all things. God is as but a point on the extreme circumference of His creature's thought. Nay more, in its more developed form, this temper makes God Himself a pure creation of the thought of His creature; and, by doing so, it at length denies His real existence. But even where it stops very far short of this fatal and culminating wrong, it accustoms men to see in religious truth the colouring or the productions of the human mind so exclusively, as to eat out the very heart of true religious life. For we men can no more worship that which we deem to be a creation of our own or of another man's mind, than we can knowingly worship the carved and painted workmanship of human hands. If God has spoken to us through human souls and in human language, it is when He has assured us independently, that while the instrument was human, the truth which it conveyed was Divine. But when in Christian doctrine we have learned to see nothing but successive evolutions or incrustations of human thought, and in the Christian

Scriptures nothing but a history which represents man's successive and increasingly successful efforts after knowledge of and communion with the Infinite and Eternal Being, then we never can once bring ourselves to say of any one truth that comes before us, What does this truth say to me? We hold no one truth with sufficient tenacity to make a practical application of it to our own case, to do or to suffer something at its bidding. For the truth is to us false, or imperfect, or provisional, as the case may be. Even if we cannot mistrust the clear intuition whereby we apprehend its reality and force, we still stand outside it; we contemplate it from a distance, we do not close with it; we do not surrender ourselves to it; we do not submit to it. And until this—the ὑπακοὴ πίστεως of which St. Paul speaks once and again[r]—be the attitude of the soul towards the Word of God, it is strictly impossible that the life of worship and of love in which the soul's true perfection consists, and in which its highest capacities have their play, can even be said to begin. We cannot worship some hypothesis or some compound of truth and error: so we refuse His rights to God, lest perchance we should be giving them to idols. The whole energy of the soul passes off in a prior speculation as to the amount of truth which may possibly be contained in a doctrine assumed to be of human growth. Such a speculation may indeed be justifiable or necessary. But it can of itself do nothing for the heart, the will, the central being, the truest excellence of the man who undertakes it. An educated man of the present day who would look God really in the face, has perhaps no greater intellectual difficulty to contend with, than the trammels and false points of view which strictly subjective habits of thought have imposed upon his understanding. While these habits are dominant in a man, God may be a portion, nay the most considerable

[r] Rom. i. 5; xvi. 26. Cf. Acts vi. 7.

portion, of the apparatus and embellishment of his thought: but God will not be in any true sense throned in the man's soul as the recognized Author and object of his being; He will not really be the man's *God*, before Whose awful Presence he moves with deep reverence within the sanctuary of his secret life, and to the doing of Whose will he consecrates each inner faculty and each outward opportunity at his disposal.

Among the many truths which the Supreme Being has disclosed to us men about Himself, there are two which, beyond others, are peculiarly calculated to enable us to realize our real relation towards Him. The first, the truth that God is our Creator. The second, the truth that He has made us for Himself, and is Himself the end and the explanation of our existence.

The most simple and obvious truths are, as a rule, the most profound; and no apology is needed for asking each one of you to reflect steadily on the answer to this question, Where was I one short century ago? Most of us indeed, in putting to ourselves such a question, might name a much shorter period. The sun in the heavens, the face of the earth, the general conditions of human life, were then what they are at this hour. The civilized world with its great cities, and its leading ideas, and its general currents of effort and movement, were then what they are now. England was here. Our neighbourhood, our family, it may be our home, were known. These very benches were filled by a generation which observed our Church formalities and used our devotional language. Others, it may be, were then living who bore the very names which distinguish us among men, and whose forms and faces might have almost seemed to antedate our own personal life. But we, each one of us, were as yet nothing. All the thought, and feeling, and passion, and effort which centres at this moment in, and is part of, our separate selves, did not

then exist. The lowest and vilest creatures were more than we; in that to them a being had been given, while as yet we were without one[s].

But at this moment we are in possession of that blessed and awful gift which we name 'life.' We find ourselves endowed with an understanding capable of knowledge, and with a heart formed for love. Our nature is active as well as affectionate and intelligent; it possesses high capacities for service; it is endued with a power of shaping means to ends, and with an hereditary empire over the beings which live around us. But how comes it that we do thus exist, and under such conditions? The idea of blind 'chance,' we know, is not less proscribed by science than by faith. Our parents were but the channels of vital forces which flowed from a Source beyond them. An intense homage paid to the productive powers of Nature, and issuing in a moral degradation of the idea of worship without a parallel in the history of the world, may have been natural to an Oriental imagination, and to the sensual tendencies of Phœnician blood[t]. But we, if we are true to our higher knowledge, cannot thus ascribe personal and self-dependent existence to those uniform modes of working which we observe in the physical universe. If within the narrow limits of our observation they seem to be invariable, they witness not to any objective force resident in 'nature,' but merely to that presiding law of order which characterizes the action no less than the Being of the real Agent. Each of us is a separate product of the mystery of creation. After the Being of God Himself, creation is perhaps the greatest, as it is in time the first of mysteries; it is, it must be ever, the master-difficulty for

[s] Cf. "Manrèse: Exercises Spirituels," pp. 21, 22. On my mistake with respect to this and two similar references, see the *Theological Review*, Nos. xix. and xx. I would here express my obligations to a writer in that Magazine, for pointing it out.

[t] Compare Dr. Pusey's Preface to Hosea; Comm. Min. Prophets, pt. i. p. 2.

the mind of man. That innovation on what had already been for an eternity, that new companionship of dependent beings thus welcomed, nay summoned, into His Presence by the Solitary, Self-sufficing, Ever-blessed God, is a marvel which may well prepare the soul, even for belief in the Divine Incarnation. Yet if God did not create all that is not Himself, if in the essential simplicity of His Being He is not utterly distinct from His creation, if in creation He was not a free and conscious agent, if He did not at the first give being to that which before was nothing—mark it well, my brethren—He is not a Being Whom you can worship as your God. Belief in creation is an integral part of belief in God: and He Who made the universe made each one of us. "Thine Hands have made me and fashioned me. . . . . Thine Eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in Thy book were all my members written, which day by day were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them[u]."

But there is a wide interval between admitting the dogma of the creation in the abstract, and realizing sharply and accurately that all and each of the faculties of our own souls and bodies have been created. You may read in the face of many a man whom you meet in the street that he has never faced the truth that he is a created thing, and that One Being exists to Whom he owes literally all that he has and is. The warning of the Psalmist, that it is God Who hath made us and not we ourselves, is not superfluous. For here, as elsewhere in religion, the truant action of the will interferes with the clear and direct intuitions of the intellect: and we unconsciously limit our range of view because we fear the practical consequences of too wide and perfect a vision. We cling to phrases which represent nothing, and to theories which must fade and vanish before one movement

[u] Ps. cxix. 73; cxxxix. 16.

of clear and earnest thought; because these theories and phrases relieve us for the time being of much that is implied in the direct and overwhelming sense of being simply creatures. We speak, and think, and form judgments, as if we were the authors of our own existence; not as believing ourselves seriously to be so, but simply because we shrink from facing all that is involved in the alternative, namely, that we are products of the creative love and will of our God.

Certainly God did not need any one of us: we were not indispensable to His happiness or His glory. He can have foreseen nothing in such as we are which forced Him to create us. Why did He then draw us out of that abyss of nothing? Why did He give us this existence which He has denied to so many possible beings, able better to herald His glory and to do justice to His love? Why did He place us at the summit of the visible creation rather than at its base? Why did He make us men instead of brutes, or trees, or stones? Why did He give us a soul, made in His image, and a complex nature which every where bears the lively imprint of His attributes? The answer is to be found in a revelation which was made, in the early years of his ministry, to the disappointed prophet of the falling kingdom of Judah, and upon which he fell back as the shadows of approaching ruin darkened around him. "I have loved thee," God had said of old to Israel, "with an everlasting love[x]." And St. Paul teaches that the Father hath chosen us Christians in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love[y]. It was His infinite love which, when God was self-sufficing and all-blessed in His solitary eternity, poured around Himself the countless forms of created life. And to this self-same love alone we individually

[x] Jer. xxxi. 3. [y] Eph. i. 4.

owe our existence. While as yet we were not, and while on earth men knew as little of us as we know of those who will take our places in this church a century hence, we each of us had a home and a recognition in the Thought and Heart of God. His purpose to give us life was, like Himself, eternal. And now that we live He preserves our life from moment to moment. He is, as the Psalmist says, the Strong God of each one of us. He sustains our life as a complex whole; He upholds each one of its constitutive powers and faculties, so truly and so unceasingly, that did He for one moment withdraw His hand our being must dissolve, and fade away into that nothingness out of which He has taken it.

This is one of the cardinal truths of that earlier revelation which was committed to the Jewish Church, and it is unnecessary to remind you how profoundly it interpenetrates the whole mind of the Old Testament. Sometimes it is stated directly: more frequently it underlies the aspirations of psalmists or the warnings of prophets. We may fearlessly say that it was as certainly an integral part of the Psalmist's thought in the words before us, as it is of ours when, in the General Thanksgiving, we Christians bless God "for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life." The text may be fairly paraphrased, "O God, the Creator of all things, Thou hast created, Thou preservest me."

But this involves an admission with the most direct bearing upon life and conduct. As the Creator, God must have *rights* over the creature. These rights are more imperious and urgent than those of a sovereign over his subjects, or of a parent over his children, or of an artist over his work. As the Apostle's question reminds the factious teacher at Corinth, we have literally nothing which we have not received[z]. We simply

[z] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

belong to God. We are His property in a more absolute sense than can be implied by any illustration drawn from human life. We can retire into no depth or centre of thought and being where we do not meet Him, or where we can meet Him on equal terms. Such indeed are God's rights over us, that He Himself cannot waive them. He need not have created us, but having created us, He must needs claim us as His property. He cannot authorize us to live for any but Himself. Nothing can happen to suspend His claim. Men have no claims upon us but those which He has given them. We originally belong to God, and all human rights over us must be strictly subordinated to, as flowing from, His ownership and His supremacy. As all that we are comes from Him, so we belong to Him without exception or reserve. The senses of our bodies, the powers of our souls, the successive ages of life, thought, feeling, resolve, all are His. He is the undisputed master of our health, of our fortune, of our very life; and against Him we have neither plea nor remedy. Nay, we are bound, by the terms of our existence, to accept with submission all of His appointments. St. Paul's illustration of the cases of Pharaoh and Esau, as viewed apart from their responsibility, may be applied much more widely[a]. "The pot cannot say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Human rights perish at death. But God's claims, which begin in time, continue in eternity: the grave does not touch them. Escape Him we cannot. We must live under a dispensation of His love or a dispensation of His justice. We can nowhere be independent of Him. We may now and here choose between a free and joyous service, and a punishment which is as certain and as enduring as the being which He has given us. These rights of God over His creatures, thus resistless, thus

[a] Rom. ix. 13—21.

absolute, thus supreme, are confessed by the Church alike on earth and in heaven. "O come let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker [b]." "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created [c]."

In the truth that God has created us, we see much of the meaning of the Psalmist's words. But we see even more when we reflect that He has created us *for Himself*. That which would be selfishness in a creature, is in the great Creator a necessary result of His solitary perfection. "The Lord hath made all things for Himself [d]. He could not have done otherwise: He could not abdicate that place which belongs to Him as God. It is equally true of the highest of the Intelligences of heaven, and of the least and lowest forms of animal, or vegetable, or mineral existence, that they are made for God. The material world, indeed, sets forth His praise by its silent obedience to that law which He has given it. There are heavenly bodies which can complete their orbits only after the lapse of ages, and which then reappear with unfailing precision at the point from which they started, as if to present themselves to Him who sent them on their way. Certainly the laws of the vegetable and animal kingdoms are more complex than those which rule the heavens. But they do not less invariably yield the tribute of an absolute homage to the One End of all created life. Nor was it to have been otherwise with man in the design of his Creator. But on the frontier of the moral and human world we encounter a power in free-will, of which nothing but a precarious and feeble shadow can be traced among the lower creatures. God willed to be the object of a

[b] Ps. xcv. 6.

[c] Rev. iv. 11. Cf. for the whole passage, Manrèse, pp. 24. 25.

[d] Prov. xvi. 4.

conscious and deliberate choice on the part of the gifted creature whom He placed at the summit of the visible creation. Yet man would not have been free to choose his Maker as his end and portion, unless he had been also free to reject Him, and to fall back on some lower end or ends at variance with the true harmonies and law of his being. We know how God's generous bounty was first abused; and at this hour we note how the majestic unity of aim and movement, so conspicuous every where in those spheres which yield their object-matter to the physical sciences, ceases on the confines of the region which is the province of morals.

Yet, though we witness around us the wreck of serious convictions, and the despair of true and noble hearts, and the triumph of false theories, and the additional difficulties of our daily struggle with unseen foes, and (it may be) with the results of our own past unfaithfulness to light and grace; we have but to look within ourselves to trace without doubt or misgiving the true law of that life which our God has given us. By gathering up the scattered fragments of the shattered statue, we can recover, if not the perfect work itself, at least the ideal which was before the Eye of the Artist. In this place we are sufficiently familiar with the presumption that there must be a correspondence and proportion between a faculty and its object. Why then does the human intellect crave perpetually for new fields of knowledge? It was made to apprehend an Infinite Being; it was made for God. Why does the human heart disclose, when we probe it, such inexhaustible capacities for love, and tenderness, and self-sacrifice? It was made to correspond to a love that had neither stint nor limit; it was made for God. Why does no employment, no success, no scene or field of thought, no culture of power or faculty, no love of friend or relative, arrest definitely and for all time the

onward, craving, restless impulse of our inner being? No other explanation is so simple, as that we were made for the Infinite and Unchangeable God, compared with Whom all else is imperfect, fragile, transient, and unsatisfying.

This indeed is the true moral of that wonderful book Ecclesiastes, in which a superficial and unspiritual criticism, which can only move compassion when it does not command assent, can see nothing but "the doubts and confessions of a jaded Epicurean[e]." All that is not God is vanity, in that it yields no true response to the deep and irrepressible cravings of the soul of man[f]. And the truth of which the kingly Preacher gives us the negative side, is exhibited positively by the great St. Augustine, in that work which perhaps more than any other introduces us to the characteristics of his heart and thought. St. Augustine's Confessions combine the closest analysis of motive and experience with the charm of that exquisite unselfishness which the true sight of God alone can give. The leading idea of the Confessions is this;—that man is made to know, to love, to serve his God; and that until such a true knowledge, and love, and service has been attained as the regulating law of his life, man is condemned to find in the unsatisfied cravings of his soul, no less than in the feebleness and poverty of all that attracts his admiration and pursuit, that which is his education rather than his punishment. Augustine tells us how neither the gratification of sensual passion, nor the prospect of influence and social position, nor the intellectual fascinations of a heresy which, like Manichæism, gave large employment

[e] Such passages as Eccl. ii. 14, vii. 15, viii. 14, ix. 1—3, 6, as well as ii. 16, iii. 19, are an appeal to the surface facts of life as they meet the eye, not a statement of the writer's creed.

[f] Cf. Eccl. i. 2, 3, 8, 14, 18; ii. 2—11, 16—19, 21, 23, 26; iii. 19, 20; iv. 4, 8, 16; v. 10; vi. 2, 11, 12; vii. 6; viii. 10; xi. 8, 10; xii. 8. Compare xii. 13, 14.

and impetus to thought, could satisfy a soul, made for Himself by the Great Creator, and never utterly insensible to the true secret of its destiny. "Fecisti nos ad Te, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te[g]." These all-embracing words might well be the motto of the work by which this great Father is most closely linked to the heart of Christendom, while they are only an expansion of the thought of the Psalmist, "O God, Thou art my God[h]."

This truth, if it be mastered, will furnish the answer to many questions upon which we waste an unnecessary amount of time and thought. The knowledge, and love, and service of our Maker is not, like the indulgence of a sentiment or a taste, a matter of choice. For every man who looks God and life steadily in the face, it is a stern necessity. We can do without large incomes, and a high social position, and a name among men. Length of days, and health of body, and elasticity of mind are great blessings; yet they may be dispensed with. But once born, we *must* serve God. Not to serve God, is to be in the moral world that which a deformity or monster is in the world of animal existence. It is not only to defy the claims of God. It is to ignore the plain demands of our inner being, to do violence to the highest guidance of our mysterious and complex life. We may fearlessly say that we men are of too high a lineage to give the strength of our thoughts and hearts to any beneath the throne of Him Who made us[i]. No mortal man, no angel, no creature however noble and exalted, may claim in its own name and for itself the homage of a soul which, living once, lives for ever. Our true end in thought, and affection, and

[g] St. Aug. Conf. i. 1.

[h] St. Augustine's complete teaching on the nature of the Supreme Good is strikingly worked out by Nourrisson, Philosophie de S. Aug. vol. ii. c. 6.

[i] Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. c. 3.

effort must be none other than the end for which the best of men, for which the angel, for which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for which the Almighty God Himself, lives, and thinks, and loves, and works. For whom does God live? For Himself; that He may contemplate, and love, and glorify Himself[k]. And such is the high honour that He has put on us men, that the end of our being is none other than that of His own; nor can we refuse to love and to serve Him without forfeiting our true patent of nobility among the creatures of His Hand.

And is it not plain that for us Christians the words of the King of Israel have a deeper sense than they could have conveyed to the worshipper within the courts of the temple, who claimed the God of all creation as the Author and the Object of his personal life? Within the kingdom of the Incarnation the true law of man's life is no longer an ideal which eludes and disheartens us. It may be realized. That His creatures might no longer shrink from Him in their weakness and pollution; that He might be their strong God more literally than He could be the strength of David; that Christians might fold Him to their inmost souls with a wondering yet triumphant sense of possession, with a trembling yet endearing intimacy of touch, which else had been inconceivable; the Incomprehensible has submitted to bonds, the Eternal has entered into conditions of time, the Most Holy has been a Victim for sin. This is the central, the essential, the imperishable faith of Christendom. It makes God the God of those who cling to Him in self-renouncing confidence, after a manner and measure which they only can know who have the happiness to do so. For such as these the past is pardoned through the Atoning Blood. For such as these the problems of life are few and simple. The sky above their heads may be overclouded by a passing storm, but they carry within

[k] Manrèse, p. 28.

themselves Him the very tokens of Whose Presence are commonly hidden from other men. Through the Spirit and the Sacraments they lay true hold upon that Perfect Manhood in Which dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Christ in them is the hope of glory[l]. Their thoughts, their affections, their resolves are gradually interpenetrated by the Intellect, and Heart, and Will of the Son of Man[m]. They live, yet not they, but Christ liveth in them[n]. He is at once their philosophy, and their robe of righteousness, and the internal principle of their progressive sanctification[o]. They are made to sit with Him together in heavenly places[p]; they live beneath His smile; they partake of His bounty[q]. They know that if only they be true to Him, He will not leave them[r]; and that in the land which lies beyond that horizon of time on which the strained eye of their souls rests with eager hope, they will be His, and He will be theirs, yet more intimately, and indeed for ever[s].

In this place we rightly count it a point of educational honour to restrain and discourage all that is exaggerated, whether in language or feeling, and to impose a stern reserve upon ourselves rather than risk the approach to it. Nor can we, when seeking, or when proclaiming truth, be too careful ourselves to aim at being simply and severely true. But pardon me for adding, that language which to faith represents a living and energetic truth must often seem to doubt or to half-belief only the repulsive jargon of an unintelligible rhetoric. In the same way, from a worldly point of view, the conduct of Christ's servants may be deemed an irrational fanaticism, while in reality it proceeds upon the calmest and most unimpassioned survey of facts and their attendant obligations.

[l] Col. i. 27. [m] 1 Cor. ii. 16. [n] Gal. ii. 20. [o] 1 Cor. i. 30.
[p] Eph. ii. 6. [q] Phil. iii. 8, 9. [r] Rom. viii. 38, 39.
[s] St. John xii. 26; xiv. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 17.

Is God the Author and the End of our existence? Is it a solemn truth that by the Incarnation and Death of the Everlasting Son we have been redeemed from disobedience to the true law of our being, and that we are really free to serve our God? Is this redemption characterized by a prodigality of tenderness which must appeal, if to nothing higher, to our mere natural sense of generosity? Then we may not sit still, interested indeed but passive, as if these central and soul-stirring truths were addressed merely to our speculative faculties. There is such a thing as giving ourselves to God. It is not a dream of the past, a beautiful but impracticable aspiration for such as we, who are the children of a modern civilization, and who inherit modes of thought and feeling which our fathers knew not. The changes of the human spirit can no more touch the rights of the unchangeable God than they can affect the real conditions of life and death. Sitting high above the waterflood of human opinion, and remaining a King for ever, our God still whispers to the inmost conscience of the men of our day the mystery and secret of their destiny. He bids you, my brethren, on whom He has shed blessings denied to the vast majority of your countrymen, to use the light and liberty which He has given you by a free consecration of yourselves to His perfect service.

Do not so misunderstand this as to suppose that you are being urged indiscriminately to take Holy Orders. Certainly the lowest and least of us who have the happiness to wear Christ's livery in the priesthood, and to minister to His glory and to the souls of men, if only we be faithful to the spirit of our commission, may claim a higher place than can be given to any who share not the toils and responsibilities of our service. Yet beyond a doubt, of those who will reign with Him for ever in heaven, the vast majority, it may be (as St. Chrysostom

seemed to think, by reason of the perils of clerical service) the great relative majority, will be laymen. It is as dangerous to pass the threshold of the sanctuary without a true secret call from Him Who reigns there, as it is to hold back, in obedience to human opinion or to worldly considerations, when He beckons us forward. It is said that the Apostle's description of the members of the Church at Corinth is becoming applicable to those who seek Holy Orders in the Church of England; *οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα, οὐ πολλοὶ δυνατοὶ, οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς*[t]" It is said that intellect, and influence, and station, give less than they gave ten years ago to the one cause which has a first claim upon the thought and heart of a Christian country. If indeed it be so, the loss is not His, Who can uphold as at the first He reared His Church by feeble hands, amid the scorn and against the anticipations of the thoughtful and the strong. They really lose who have much to give, and who thoughtlessly or purposely refuse to give it.

The question of self-consecration to God is prior to any inquiry into the form which He may ultimately bid it assume. It is a question for us; not as being candidates for Orders, but as being Christians, aye, as being men. Is the God of heaven and earth to be, by virtue of our personal self-surrender to His service, as He is already by the tenour of His creative and redemptive relations, *our* God? . . . We cannot insure ourselves for the future; we cannot command one movement of the heart or of the will beyond the actual present. . . . Amid these solemnities there is not matter for many words. The deepest waters glide silently onwards. The soul's truest and most intimate converse with its Maker must command a reverential reserve, and cannot without risk of injury be forced into language. . . .

[t] 1 Cor. i. 26.

But, believe it, we can only glorify God by yielding ourselves to Him. No other conduct on our part does justice to His claims. We can only become holy by giving ourselves up to Him, since nothing less than this master effort can ensure that pliancy of the will which is essential to sanctification. Only thus, can we imitate Jesus Christ, since this absolute surrender of His Manhood to His Father's glory was the predominating law of His earthly life. Only when we have sincerely given ourselves to the Holy God does the moral teaching of the Gospel justify itself in detail to our inmost conscience, as the serious exhibition of what a creature should be beneath the eye of His Creator. Only when we have given ourselves to the all-wise God can we, without hesitation or fear, aye, with the utmost intrepidity, engage in inquiries reaching down to the very base of truth; because then we carry with us into every argument a premise which never lets us for one moment forget our real place and capacities. Only when we have freely given ourselves to the most merciful God do we know what it is indeed to pray, to speak to God with that trustful yet reverent familiarity which becomes children who feel that they have and can have no secrets to hide from their Father in heaven. Only when we have presented ourselves unreservedly to God as a living sacrifice, can we taste the joy of an untroubled conscience, and of a true inward peace of soul, and of a moral assurance of salvation, through His most precious death, Who makes our self-oblation an acceptable reality. In short, only when by a real moral act we have restored to God the freedom which He has given us, do we enter even distantly into the full meaning of the Psalmist's words, "O God, Thou art my God."

For it is certain that at the last God gives Himself to us in a measure proportioned to that in which we have

offered ourselves to Him. We may, in life's journey, have met with those, who, in a spirit of boisterous self-will, have made a grand tour of the world, and after tasting of all the sensualities and all the scepticisms, after resisting no form of moral or intellectual temptation, and finding satisfaction, as they must find it, nowhere, return while yet they may, in the late evening of their days, to offer to their Maker and Redeemer the scanty relics of a wasted life. Even for such, we know, there is a smile of recognition and a word of mercy. But for those who, with the Psalmist, seeking Him early and diligently, give Him the hopes of their youth and the strength of their manhood; for those who give intellect when it is now expanding to the full measure of its grasp, and affections when they have as yet lost nothing of their freshness and purity, and will when it has learnt by obedience something of that freedom, and rectitude, and strength of movement in which its perfection consists; for a Samuel, for a David, for a Saul of Tarsus, for a Timothy, aye, for an Augustine, He prepares, even in this world, a lavish acknowledgment; He bestows on such as these a fulness of blessing, and joy, and peace, which the eye of nature hath not seen, nor its ear heard, nor the unrenewed heart of man conceived to tell[u].

"Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee. And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting[x]."

[u] 1 Cor. ii. 9. [x] St. Luke xviii. 28—30.

SERMON II.

THE LAW OF PROGRESS.

PHIL. iii. 13, 14.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

IN these fervid words the Apostle is correcting a misapprehension which might have been occasioned by his previous language. If we may argue from the absence of censure and the warmth of commendation which distinguish this Epistle, the Church of Philippi in point of spiritual attainments must have been in the first rank, if not absolutely first, among the Apostolical Churches. Yet even the Philippians needed a passing warning. Active and mischievous teachers were abroad who would fain have placed the Sacrifice of Calvary and the Sacraments of the New Covenant on the level of the legal shadows which pointed to them, and who would have imprisoned the Catholic Church within the narrow precincts of their national synagogue. St. Paul appeals to his own case against the Judaizers. He had actually enjoyed those distinctions of race and blood, of exact compliance with the prescriptions of the ancient ritual, of high religious standing, of public consideration and personal character which they so earnestly coveted or recommended.

At the bidding of Heaven, he had taken the true measure of these things, and had renounced them. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh [i. e. the outward legal privileges insisted on by the Judaizers], I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless. But what things were gain unto me, those I counted loss for Christ[a]." This estimate he proceeds to justify by enumerating some distinctive and counterbalancing privileges and attractions of the Gospel. He first names Christ's gift of a divine righteousness received by the hand of faith[b]. Then, Christ's Resurrection-power raising man's whole moral nature from the tomb of sin and selfishness. To these, writing from his Roman prison, the Apostle adds the mysterious privilege of fellowship with Christ's awful Sufferings, which soothe, sweeten, sanctify, ennoble human pain, and transform it into a renovating moral force[c]. Hereupon, there follows a hope, not very confidently phrased; εἴ πως καταντήσω. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead[d]!"

Did then this one mighty moral act by which St. Paul had passed from nature to grace, from error to truth, from Judaism to the Church, so epitomize and contain in itself his whole spiritual history as to make all further aspirations, movements, efforts, superfluous? Something of this kind has at various times moved the minds of unspiritual men, who have desired by one great sacrifice to compound with Heaven, and so to escape from the responsibility, from the wearing and commonplace trials of a daily struggle. They have taken it for granted that the probation of a soul, instead of being continued to the hour

[a] Phil. iii. 4—7. [b] Ibid. 9. [c] Ibid. 10. [d] Ibid. 11.

of death, is practically limited to one heroic action, to one sharp pang of suffering in mind or body, to one sacrifice cheerfully accepted for the sake of Christ. They have accounted conversion to be not merely a renunciation of the past, but an insurance of the future beyond risk of forfeiture.

Not thus, however, was it with the great Apostle. He protests against the thought of "his having already attained, or being already perfect[e]." At his conversion, he maintains, Christ had laid hold on him to enable him to attain that for which he was still striving. *Διώκω εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήφθην ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*[f]. This first protest is followed up by a second, yet more earnest and emphatic, both in its disavowal of satisfaction with present attainments, and in its energetic description of the onward upward impulse of an Apostle's life. The language is sensibly coloured by the image of the Greek racer, and we are reminded of the more detailed elaboration of the metaphor in the First Epistle to the Corinthians[g]. The race is undecided: "I count not myself to have apprehended[h]." In the eager pressure of the struggle, the racer cannot measure the ground which he has already traversed; he forgets those things which are behind. He reaches forward to those things that are before; *ἐπεκτεινόμενος*; "the bodily attitude exactly picturing the mental impulse both in its posture and direction[i]." He presses forward towards the mark, for the prize with which He Who had called him from heaven was at length to bless him. The things behind (*τὰ ὀπίσω*), which he forgets, are not merely the external prerogatives of Judaism. As the metaphor would itself suggest, they are the earlier struggles, the past experiences, the incomplete attainments of the Christian. He may by and by,

[e] Phil. iii. 12. [f] Ibid. [g] 1 Cor. ix. 24–27.
[h] Phil. iii. 13. [i] Ellicott in loc.

within (as it would seem) three months of his martyrdom, pause and draw breath, in the moral assurance of victory. "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness[j]." Be it however remembered that when St. Paul is writing to the Philippians, that entire section of his life which is described in the Acts of the Apostles is already past. What had been at first a more external and human appreciation of his Saviour has long yielded to a profoundly spiritual recognition of His glory; "he knows Christ after the flesh no more[k]." Already he has written his greatest Epistles; he has founded his noblest Churches. Nay more, he has even been caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words[l]. Yet he forgets those things that are behind and reaches forward. For his life is true to the law which is obeyed by the highest as by the lowest of the true servants of Christ; it is a life of progress.

In the Apostle's words we seem, within the sanctuary, to catch the echo of one of those most familiar and most powerful watchwords which from time to time rally around them the thoughts and determine the activities of the great outside world of men. In each age public human life has its watchwords; it has its representative language no less than its representative men. These watchwords do, as a matter of fact, shape the thoughts and efforts of multitudes. Even the practical, unspeculative spirit of Englishmen does not afford a guarantee against their influence. They are proclaimed with an accent of sincerity and conviction by the earnest few. They are echoed, in an indolent, an imitative, or a self-seeking spirit, by the less thoughtful many. They claim notice at the hands of Christians just so far as they may seem to affect the higher, that is, the moral and eternal interests of man. No watchword can become the rallying-

[j] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. [k] 2 Cor. v. 16. [l] Ibid. xii. 4.

cry of large masses of men, who differ in temper, interests, station, and blood, without containing a certain germ of truth, however that truth may be misapplied, overlaid, or even caricatured. To sever the original truth from the later misapplication, to give freedom to the principle which has been maliciously or accidentally imprisoned within the bands and folds of a parasitical error, may be difficult, but is surely just. Such an attempt, however unsuccessful, is at any rate in harmony with the special work of those who, here or elsewhere, speak for Christ to the generations of men.

In our own days no rallying-cry has gained more prominence or exerted more power than the demand for Progress. The most opposite aspirations, aye, the most earnest and determined antagonists, range themselves simultaneously under the banner of Progress. Government, society, art, science, even religion, are in turn challenged, reviewed, judged in the name of Progress. Here indeed in Oxford, the tradition of a thousand years still overshadows our life with rich and varied memories of the past: and to this day the Church of God wields among us a social and moral empire, and protects, however imperfectly, the souls of men against the licence of intellectual caprice and of animal rebellion. But even here we are no strangers to a language which is echoed by all the tongues of Europe. In order to recommend a measure, a book, an opinion, a man, we too insist on the necessity of Progress. In order to stamp on a party, or a line of thought, or an institution, or a social or literary combination, the brand of modern society, we too, as befits the disciples of Progress, mutter a characteristic anathema; we call it "reaction."

It has indeed been suggested that Progress is one of those modern ideas which confront the Church of God at this hour, under conditions somewhat similar to those

which brought her face to face with the Northern Barbarians on the Rhine and on the Danube at the break-up of the great Empire of Rome. The savage, we are told, is hostile, but he is also generous; you may educate his natural nobleness and raise it into chivalry; you have but to exorcise the evil spirit that is in him; you have but to baptize him, and he will become the founder of a more vigorous and Christian civilization; he will be the eldest son of the Church.

But this representation cannot be seriously admitted as true. For between the abstract idea of Progress and the claims of religious truth there is not merely no antagonism, there is an intimate and essential harmony. This harmony may be traced no less in the religious instincts of the soul than in the historical manifestation of revealed religion.

The source and motive of Progress is a sense of want, of short-coming. It is the very voice of truth, which confesses imperfections and yearns to rise. This true, this humble sense of actual imperfection is provoked and kept alive by a vision, an ideal of possible perfection, which haunts the secret soul of man, and which is a relic of Eden. Man was created for God; and the depths of the human soul, even in its ruin, bear witness to the original greatness of human destiny. The unreflecting, unruffled contentment of the creatures around us, contrasts sharply with the unsatisfied yearnings of man. The placid repose of the brutes is never troubled by any impulse or attraction which leads them to yearn for a state higher or nobler than their present existence. But in man, something, be it a memory or an anticipation, is perpetually protesting against the actual attainments of human life, and stimulating him to seek a more perfect and higher condition. Underlying sin, sense, misconception, weakness, this shadowy perception of an ideal

greatness, this craving for a beauty which transcends the realities of experience, is continually upheaving thought and society; it is pouring itself forth, whether in graduated movements or in volcanic eruptions; it is allying itself often with all that is true and noble, and not seldom with the destructive energies of pure evil. Even Robespierre was sincere in his pursuit of an ideal which his crimes have buried out of sight; and all the seven deadly sins, one after another, have claimed to be the agents of Progress. But however various and perverted the result, the original impulse is from God. It is the creature, craving—whether in morals, or society, or art, or speculation, or whatever department of man's activity—for something beyond its actual attainments. It is the effort to satisfy an unquenchable thirst for the Infinite. Allied to this sense of ideal perfection is the mighty power of hope. Hope nerves man's arm while it gladdens his heart. Hope is the lever which moves human nature. Without hope, man's knowledge may be but the measure of his despair. Doubtless this desire for an unattained perfection, this sanguine reaching after a still distant blessing, may fail, and fail grievously, of securing its true object. It may be seduced by attractive insincerities, and prostituted to odious and irreligious endeavours. Yet its very errors bear witness to its strength, while they may not blind us to the greatness of its origin.

But is not this same yearning for an unattained perfection, joined to a hope that such anxiety will not be disappointed, among the dispositions which most readily welcome Revelation to its throne within the soul? Was not Revelation itself for long ages a perpetual Progress? Was it not a Progress from Eden to Moriah, a Progress from Moriah to Sinai, a Progress from Sinai to Calvary? Did not the whole form and spirit of the Patriarchal faith declare plainly that the first fathers of Israel sought a

country? Was not the Law a servant[m] charged with the duty of leading the Jew to the school of Jesus Christ, both by discovering to his conscience its moral needs, and by typically foreshadowing the Atonement. the Spirit, and the Sacraments which would satisfy them? Were not the Prophets, each and all, ministers of Progress? Their predictive gift pointed towards the future; their moral energies carried men forward, whether from ceremonialism to a truer service, or from scepticism to faith, or from despair to energy, or from sheer ungodliness to the natural virtues, or from the ordinary level of the natural virtues to the height of the heroic and the supernatural. Certainly when He came, to Whom, directly or indirectly, by implication or explicitly, all His prophets pointed, He brought from heaven a Body of Truth, containing whatever we now know in respect of questions which must always possess the deepest interest for the human soul. He told us all that is to be apprehended here concerning life and death, and God and eternity. Thus the essential faith of Christendom is fixed. No advance is possible in the way of distilling its spirit from its dogma, with a view to rejecting the dogma while we retain the spirit. The spirit of Christianity is in fact inseparable from the Christian faith. No advance is possible in the way of enlarging the dogmatic area of the Creed by a process of accretive development. For the Revelation made and delivered by our Lord and His Apostles was final and sufficient[n]. But the Faith, itself

[m] Παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν. Gal. iii. 24.

[n] St. Jude 3. So Bellarmine, Disp. de Verbo Dei non Scripto, iv. c. 9. Op. vol. i. p. 193: "Non novis revelationibus nunc regitur Ecclesia, sed in iis permanet, quæ tradiderunt hi qui ministri fuerunt sermonis, et propterea dicitur (Ephes. ii.) 'ædificata super fundamentum apostolorum et prophetarum.'" Kuhn contrasts this with Staudenmaier's statement that "der hl. Geist als Princip der Wahrheit nicht nur das von Christus ausgegangene göttliche Wort erhalte, sondern auch durch fortgehende Inspirationen

unchangeable and divine, has nevertheless become both in the world at large and in separate souls, a principle of Progress. On the one hand, through the Church it leavens the world so gradually, that only in our own days and with notorious difficulty is it completing its triumph over the long-tolerated evils of duelling and slavery. On the other, the Apostle in the text is himself a sample of its progressive and elevating power within the precincts of the human soul. That it has enriched and is still enriching human thought, that it has ennobled and is ennobling human character, that it has given an original impulse to entire sciences, and created virtues which were impossible without it, are simple matters of fact. No hostility to Christian doctrine can justify indifference to the truth, that the world owes to Christianity the matured idea of Progress, and the one serious attempt to realize it. But at this point it becomes necessary to reply more precisely to the question, what it is that we mean by Progress.

1. First, then, it will be at once conceded that a true Progress must be the Progress of man. I say, of man himself; as distinct from the organization, appliances, or embellishments of his life; as distinct, in short, from any thing which is properly outside him.

Contrast this obvious and vital truth with one of the most general conceptions of Progress at the present day. What is too often meant by our public writers and public speakers when they periodically celebrate the triumphs or stimulate the energies of Progress? Surely they mean, first and chiefly, that which ministers comfort, enjoyment, dignity, well-being to man's outward life. To promote or

Wahrheiten aufs Neue immer wieder erzeuge." (Christliche Dogm. i. s. 19.) Yet Staudenmaier's principle seems necessary to account for the recent growth of the Roman Creed, however much more truly Bellarmine may represent the mind of antiquity, in his adherence to the 'quod semper' of Vincentius of Lerins. Compare Dr. Mill's remarks; "Five Sermons on the Nature of Christianity," pp. 17—20.

to rivet man's empire over the world of matter, to organize human life in such sort, that you secure to the individual the highest amount of personal enjoyment which is compatible with the interests of the community at large;—that is Progress. Political reforms, great constructive efforts, rapid locomotion, sanitary improvements, vast accumulations of capital, seconded by vast outlays, inventions which economize labour, or which relieve pain;—these are Progress. Egypt with her colossal public works, Greece with her freedom of personal action, Rome with her imperial organization, Tyre or Corinth with their industrial activities—these, rather than Jerusalem, are the chosen types of Progress. Progress is almost a marketable commodity; it can be measured, weighed, valued. Mental speculation that does not invent or that cannot be utilized, morals which do not sanction this or that economical theory, or subserve the lower instincts of an Epicureanized society;—these are the enemies of Progress. We are bidden compare English life of to-day, in its outward aspects, with the life of Englishmen in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, or with the life of our own grandfathers. We are referred to the growth of the national Constitution, continued through centuries, and still in process of development; to the marvellous productiveness of the daily press; to the foundation of cities and colonies, on the other side of the Atlantic or beyond the Equator, which in a few years have achieved improvements and successes that had cost Europe centuries of labour and suffering. "See," cry the prophets of material Progress, "how we are gradually completing the conquest of nature and putting all things in subjection under our feet. From city to city, from country to country, from continent to continent, the electric wire flashes forth our thought or our resolution almost with the accuracy and swiftness of a bodily sense or of a mental faculty. Our art is no longer

bound down to the slow and disappointing travail of the brush or of the pencil; the light of heaven is itself an artist ready to our hand, and a likeness of faultless accuracy, which would have been impossible even after years of labour to the miniature painters of the last generation, can be ensured by our chemistry with mechanical certainty in the course of a few seconds. Steam power, as if it were a living creature which we had trained and harnessed, has rendered us wellnigh independent of distance and of fatigue; we do not consult, we all but control the winds and the waves. We descend into the bowels of the earth; we draw forth from its hidden caverns the gas or the petroleum; we reverse the original arrangements of Providence, and we turn the night of our great cities into day. But, forgetting those things that are behind, we look forward to those things that are before. New discoveries, new inventions, new triumphs await us or our children. There are yet secrets which may be wrung from nature; there are yet playing around us, above us, beneath us, awful and subtle powers or properties which may in time become the slaves of man. We reap to-day only the earlier harvests of the Baconian philosophy; we are but keeping time with the first footsteps of the mighty march of the modern world. It is true that, as contrasted with our grandfathers, we are great and powerful; yet for our descendants there is reserved a land of promise, compared with which our modern civilization is but as the desert. Our children will assuredly witness an advance of man's power over the materials around him, which will throw the achievements of the present time utterly into the shade; the attainments of which we are so proud to-day will be deemed by our posterity as little better than the higher efforts of an effete barbarism[o]."

[o] Of this temper the recent work of M. About, "Le Progrès," is a fair sample. In his "Le monde, tel qu'il sera" (Paris, 1859), M. Emile Sou-

To these enthusiasms the Church of God replies in no narrow or unfriendly spirit, as if she were committed to a Manichæan heresy on the subject of matter, and could see in its useful employment and development nothing but a triumph of evil. She has not so forgotten the blessing of Eden, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it[p]," as to look with a jaundiced eye on the various and mighty products of the hands and brains of the sons of men. Nay more, we Christians do not grudgingly admit, we vehemently assert, on the part of Religion, that material progress does contribute real although indirect service to the higher, that is, to the moral interests of man. And it will be noted with especial thankfulness by those who have at heart something of their Lord's love of the poor and feeble, that the lower you descend in the scale of society, the more distinctly can you estimate the greatness of the debt which the soul of man owes to progressive improvements, whether in the ordering of society itself, or in the utilization of matter.

But, at the same time, let us never forget it, society may be well organized, while man himself is barbarous and selfish. And yet more certainly, man's conquests over matter are no adequate measure of the true progress of man. For man, although dwelling in a material form and on the confines of a world of matter, is yet in himself an imperishable and spiritual being, linked by his higher nature to an immaterial world. Man can analyze, mould, and employ matter, precisely because he is superior to it. He cannot himself, in his inmost being, be raised by that which is beneath him, and which yields to the vigour of his thought and of his hands. Comprehend, my brethren, your matchless dignity

vestre shows himself sufficiently alive to its occasional exaggeration and absurdity. Cf. also Félix, Conf. i. 190. sqq., to whom several of the thoughts in this sermon are due.

[p] Gen. ix. 1.

in your Creator's world. Each of you *has*, nay rather each of you *is*, that with which nothing material, be it force, or magnitude, or law, be it fluid or mineral, be it atom or planet, can rightly challenge comparison. Each of you is, in the depth of his personality, a spiritual substance. This substance is without extent, without form, without colour, unseen, impalpable. This substance is so subtle, that in its mysterious and inaccessible retreats it can be detected neither by the knife of the anatomist nor by the keen observation of the psychologist. This substance is so living and strong, that each member, each nerve of your body, each fold, each tissue of your brain, is at once its instrument, and the proof of its presence, and its empire. The human soul! who that has pondered, even superficially, over the mysterious depths of life within him—depths of which he knows so little, yet which are so intimately himself—can submit to the falsehood and degradation of the theory which makes man's real progress to consist of a mere succession in the external modifications of senseless matter?

Let it be thankfully and joyfully granted that as a means to a higher end, material improvement is a healthful condition of human life, and a blessing from God. But its exaggeration, at the expense of that which it should subserve, is a curse, than which none is more fatal to the progress of man. When the sense of the Unseen and the Eternal and all the finer sympathies have been crushed out by the dead weight or worship of matter, man sinks in the creation of God, even though he should learn to wield more and more power year by year over the dead atoms around him. Mr. Buckle remarkably illustrates one side of this position in that able chapter of his work on Civilization, in which he traces the almost exclusive interest in physical studies, combined with a wide-spread scepticism, which characterized the intellectual movement of France in the period

immediately preceding the culminating atrocities of the great Revolution [q]. A high material civilization does but arm the human brute with new instruments of his lust or his ferocity, unless it go hand in hand with a power that can penetrate his heart and mould his will. Corpulence is not the evidence of health; it is the certain symptom of disease. When the ruling tendencies and studies of society are materialized, the human soul is condemned to an inevitable degradation. There is a subtle law of assimilation whereby man, in his deepest life, receives an impress from the object on which his gaze is habitually fixed. Those who gaze heavenward are, as the Apostle tells us, changed by the Image of Perfect Beauty from one to another degree of glory. Those who look downwards and earthwards receive as certainly the stamp and likeness of the things beneath them; they lose their hold by a progressive declension on all that sublimates and ennobles human life. They sink downward and deeper, till at length they discover in man himself nothing but the anatomy or the chemistry of his body. They seek at length, and they find in themselves and in their brother men the mere animal; they positively can see before them nothing but the animal, gifted doubtless with strange accomplishments, yet after all, and at bottom, only the self-seeking, brutal, lustful, cruel, perishing animal. They reckon the very idea of a moral and spiritual destiny or

[q] Hist. Civilization, i. pp. 788, sqq.; especially p. 796: "In France during the latter half of the eighteenth century this [one great idea at work] was the inferiority of the internal to the external. It was this dangerous but plausible principle which drew the attention of men from the Church to the State; which was seen in Helvétius, the most celebrated of the French moralists, and in Condillac, the most celebrated of the French metaphysicians. It was this same principle which, by increasing, if I may say so, the reputation of Nature, induced the ablest thinkers to devote themselves to a study of her laws, and to abandon those other pursuits which had been popular in a preceding age."

capacity to be but a mere freak of human conceit, or a snare of priestly impos tion[r]. When we consider these depths of what is, alas! far from being an imaginary degradation, we learn to estimate at its true value the doctrine of a mere material progress. Whatever else may be said of it, it cannot be said to be human; it cannot be pressed on our sympathies and attention on the ground of being the progress of man as man.

2. A second canon of Progress is this; it must embrace the whole of human nature. It must not consist in the undue development of a single power or faculty, to the prejudice of other sides or capacities of man's complex being. Let me suggest a single illustration of my meaning from our experience and circumstances in this place. We have no violent temptations here to sacrifice higher interests to industrial or material ones. We have, for instance, no sympathy with men of whom it has been said, that their names might be found in the Book of Life, if the Book of Life could be supposed to be a ledger. If not by the grace of God and the illumination of His truth, yet at least by the generous impulses of a liberal education, we desiderate some higher form of progress than that which solely consists in refashioning and utilizing matter. Thus to some among us the progress of man seems to be exactly coextensive with the growth of his mind. "Only inform, exercise, strengthen, sharpen, widen, unfold, develope the human intellect, and the human intellect will become the instrument of a true and necessary progress." A doctrine, which, be it what else it may, is at least familiar, and indeed certain, for obvious reasons, to find acceptance and welcome in this home and sanctuary of high education!

. Nor would I be so altogether misunderstood, that you should construe any words of mine as a caution or protest

[r] See, for example, Dr. Büchner, Kraft und Stoff, pp. 139, sqq. (French ed.)

against high intellectual culture. It cannot be God's will that His ministers should counsel neglect of that which, after His supernatural grace, is amongst the very noblest of His gifts to man. Certainly, my younger brethren, your highest work in this place is not the mere accumulation of facts; it is the education of faculties; it is eminently the discipline and development of intellect. For intellect is not merely the tool which you will presently use for the business of life. Intellect is the eye which may be tutored accurately and truly to see truth; it is the faculty which, quickened by adoring love and sanctified by grace, is for an eternity to have as its object the Eternal and Infinite God. You especially, whose happiness it is to receive joyfully and intelligently the doctrines of the Church, and who propose to devote yourselves to the service of her altars,—you assuredly have the very highest and strongest motive that men can have for the energetic cultivation of your minds. It is your privilege, your duty—your sacred duty—to cultivate intellect. Aye, cultivate it long and well. Not indeed that it may, in its strength and beauty, be merely the pledge of a selfish temporal advancement, which shall win you a larger income or a higher position than your brethren, to be clutched for a few years at best, and then as a paltry bauble to be buried in your graves. But cultivate intellect rather as an instrument of your religious, your life-absorbing work, which has to be wrought within your own souls no less than without them. Cultivate it as a consecrated weapon entrusted to you by Heaven, that here you may devote your best energies to whetting, polishing, testing, strengthening it, until at the moment of your ordination, in a spirit of disinterested loyalty, you place it absolutely and for ever at the disposal of that Eternal Lord Who gave and Who deigns to use it.

Yes, the development, the religious development of

intellect, is unquestionably a prominent feature of true human progress. But it is only a feature, and not the whole. When intellectual activity is substituted for moral and spiritual energy; when a man's mind is developed at the expense of his heart and of his will; still more, when he has learnt to estimate his fellow-creatures only by an intellectual standard, he deserves, I will not say active censure, but at any rate a very sincere compassion. There is a well-authenticated tradition of a famous argument between that great scholar and divine Bishop Horsley, and one to whom I may be permitted to refer with something of the reverent admiration due most assuredly from the members of a great society to a name which it must ever cherish with love and honour—Dr. Cyril Jackson, Dean of Christ Church. They sat, it is said, late into the night, pouring forth thoughts for which men would have given one of them at least scanty credit. They were debating the question whether God could be better reached by His creatures through the exercise of their intellects, or through the exercise of their affections. Unwillingly, but step by step, the Bishop, who advocated the claims of intellect, retreated before the arguments of his friend, till at length, in a spirit which did no less honour to his humility than to his candour, he exclaimed, "Then my whole life has been one great mistake[s]." Certainly that conclusion had been already anticipated by St. Paul, as notably in that marvellous Epistle which the Church reads to-day[t]; and the extreme antagonist theory, whether put forward by primitive Gnostics, or by paradoxical schoolmen, or by the cold sceptics of the last age, has never found an echo in the great heart of the human family. For men perceive that a pure intellectualism is apt to fall short even of the lower measures

[s] I am indebted to Dr. Pusey for this account: he received it from Bishop Lloyd.

[t] 1 Cor. xiii.

of duty. When it is unbalanced by a warm heart and a vigorous will, the mere cultivation of mind makes a man alternately selfish and weak. Selfish; if, for instance, to the prosecution of a private speculation or to the assertion of a private theory, the faith, the moral vigour, the broadest and highest interests of others are sacrificed or postponed. Weak; when the entire man is cultivated intellect and nothing else, neither love nor resolution; when the clearness of intellectual perception contrasts grimly with the absence of any practical effort; when mental development, instead of being the crowning grace of a noble character, is but as an unseemly and unproductive fungus, that has drained out to no purpose the life and strength of its parent soul. Pardon my too eager freedom, my brethren, if I ask whether any where else so many and such high gifts of natural genius, raised by cultivation to yet greater heights of power and beauty, are so frequently resultless as in this place? Is intellect any where as in Oxford so often unfolded in all its strength and subtlety only to reveal its practical incapacities, only to be poured forth on the very soil like water, while the great work of the Church and of the world so urgently needs it? And if so, why? Why but for this reason, among others? Instead of protecting and illustrating that Truth which really nerves the will for action, intellect has too often amused itself here with pulverizing all fixed convictions. It has persuaded itself that it can dispense with those high motives, without which it is itself too cold and incorporeal a thing to be of practical service in this human world. It has learnt to rejoice in its own selfish if not aimless energy; but it really has abandoned the highest work of which it was capable; it has left to an unintellectual enthusiasm, to men of much love, if of inferior mental cultivation, the task of stimulating and guiding the true progress of mankind.

3. A third rule of Progress. It must embrace, or at least recognize, the attendant facts, the outlying conditions of human life.

(*a.*) Thus the fact of the Fall, with its moral and intellectual consequences, must be frankly admitted by an adequate doctrine of human improvement. Undoubtedly that fact is energetically denied by several of the schools of modern unbelief. But it is plainly taught, and yet more widely implied and presupposed in Holy Scripture [u], as it is invariably asserted by the Catholic Church. How rarely do the secular theories of human progress condescend to recognize this solemn fact, even when they do not in terms reject it. Yet there are witnesses to its truth and cogency beyond the precincts of theology, and in regions of inquiry more welcome to the genius of anti-religious thought. There is the pagan doctrine—so true, yet so unaccounted for by paganism—of the difficulty of virtue [x]. There is the very sense of the word virtue itself; it implies force, vigour, something higher than the dead level of man's ordinary life. There is the spontaneous tendency to evil, profoundly imbedded in humankind, and admitted even by unchristian writers, when they are off their guard and not alive to the consequences of the admission. Consider, again, man's undeniable aversion for his brother man when in a state of nature; it is a fierce, truculent passion, unless it be checked or controlled by ties of interest, of friendship, or of blood. So that when man's life is organized into human society, and society is furnishing itself with government, it can only secure itself against tyranny and corruption

[u] Job xiv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Isa. liii. 6. St. John ii. 24, 25; iii. 3. 5, 6; Rom. iii. 9. 23; v. 12; vii. 18. Eph. iv. 22, &c.

[x] Ar. Eth. ii. 3. 10: *περὶ δὲ τὸ χαλεπώτερον ἀεὶ καὶ τέχνη γίνεται καὶ ἀρετή.* Cf. Eth. ii. 6. 14; ii. 9. 7; iii. 1. 9; iii. 9. 2; iv. 1. 9; iv. 3. 16; v. 1. 18; v. 9. 13—16, &c.

by a mechanical system of checks and counter-checks. Why should this be so, but because human nature knows itself too well not to provide against its native instincts? There is indeed the theory of the French philosopher, "That man is born good, but is depraved by society[y]. But that doctrine is now only referred to as a curiosity. It is interesting as illustrating the intellectual misfortunes of men who wish to be true to the facts of human nature, while they refuse to accept the doctrines of the Gospel.

(β.) Then, again, look at the wonderful phenomenon of grace. Grace is not that mere barren, inoperative sentiment of good-will or favour on the part of the Supreme Being, which a secret anthropomorphism in the Socinian theologians led them to ascribe to Him, mainly because they were familiar with a like shadowy benevolence in themselves. In God, to will is to act, to favour is to bless; and thus grace is not simply kindly feeling on the part of God, but a positive boon conferred on man. Grace is a real and active force; it is, as the Apostle says, "the power that worketh in us[z]," illuminating the intellect, warming the heart, strengthening the will of redeemed humanity. It is the might of the Everlasting Spirit renovating man by uniting him, whether immediately or through the Sacraments, to the Sacred Manhood of the Word Incarnate[a]. Here again is a fact, controverted by scepticism, but certain to faith, which can be as little omitted in any comprehensive and adequate doctrine of Progress, as the law of attraction could be

[y] Rousseau. See his "Emile." [z] Eph. iii. 20.

[a] Hooker, Eccl. Pol., V. lvi. 8: "That Which quickeneth us is the Spirit of the Second Adam, and His Flesh that wherewith He quickeneth." Therefore (ibid. V. l. 2), "we all admire and honour the Holy Sacraments, not respecting so much the service which we do unto God in receiving them, as the dignity of that Sacred and Secret Gift which we thereby receive from God."

ignored by a physical philosopher who was explaining the system and movements of the heavenly bodies.

(γ.) Again, there is the fact of immortality, of an eternity beyond the grave, of an eternal heaven and an eternal hell. Can any theory of human progress dare to claim our attention, which, while not venturing to reject these tremendous truths, yet does in practice proceed as if they were uncertain or improbable? What a poor, what a narrow, what an unworthy conception of man's capacity for progress, is that which sees no horizon beyond the tomb! In what terms would you yourselves stigmatize a plan of education which should treat a pupil as if he were to be always a child, and as if there were no need for anticipating the powers and the opportunities, or for guarding him against the dangers, of his coming manhood! Yet surely this error is trivial when compared to theirs, whose sense of the mighty future is so feeble or so false, that they would deal with an undying being as if he were more shortlived than many of the perishing beasts and trees, amid which he prepares himself for his illimitable destiny.

Only He, dear brethren, Who at the first gifted our race with the instinct of Progress, and Whose kindly Providence has never left us in our wanderings to the full measure of our degradation and our shame, enables us really to deal with this question. Our Father in Heaven has, by His Blessed Son, made plain to us the true line of human Progress. He teaches us the secret of Progress, whether it be that of society in the aggregate or of the individual man. Jesus speaking to His followers, spake likewise to the nations and to the ages of Christendom, nay, to the whole human family; "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He is indeed our only path to the Heart and Mind of God; He is Truth which guides, and the vital Energy which strengthens every successful traveller. He, our Lord and Saviour, is the Only Leader,

the Only Law, the Only Impulse along the sacred way of real improvement.

For, mark it well, the highest progress of man is *moral*. The human soul is too noble and too great a thing to move forward and to expand; except when it moves towards, and is raised by, the Being Who made it. Moral Progress is the real elevation of man, not the culture of matter. Moral Progress insures the elevation, the progress of man's whole nature; his intellect opens sympathetically but necessarily in obedience to the needs of his growing conscience and of his stronger will. By a true and effective moral Progress, the kingdom of God is set up within a man, and all other things are added unto it. How largely the Church, the focus and home of this true Progress, has likewise contributed to those lower interests of human life which would fain monopolize the claim to promote them, has in our day been generously and largely admitted by philosophical historians [b]. In moral Progress man's actual history and his real dignity are recognized. For moral Progress must start from a true basis, and therefore it must recognize the fall of man. It must admit the weakness and incapacity of unassisted nature. Thus it falls back on the atoning Sacrifice of Calvary, and on the graces which flow from our ascended Saviour. It must do justice to that sense of immortality which is so inextricably bound up with our personal life, and which proves so powerful a motive to all moral action that raises and ennobles us. It must, in short, consent to train us for our duties on earth, by undertaking at the outset to train us for heaven.

Upwards and onwards, along the blessed yet thorny road which his Lord had shown him to be the true road of Progress, the great Apostle is moving in the text. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but

[b] As by M. Guizot.

this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark of the prize of my high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Behind him are the scenes, voices, associations of boyhood; for he too was once a boy. Behind him are the eager sympathies of his opening intellect, and his early generous affection for the polity and religion of his fathers. Behind him is the moral and mental agony of that wrench, whereby he had torn himself, six and twenty years before, from the fold of the national Judaism, and had passed into the bosom of the Church of God. Behind him now too are the toils, the sufferings, the persecutions, the misunderstandings, the separations, the disappointments, the triumphs, the prodigious victories of that long and chequered time which followed, and which may be said to have closed when he became a prisoner in Rome. Among the things that are behind there is, moreover, a vast inward and spiritual history; the resistances, the struggles, the failures, the self-masteries whereby, one after another, each faculty and power of that mighty soul was subdued in very deed to the truth which came from Christ. All this and more he heeds not; they are not blotted out of his thoughts, but they have fallen into the background; the Apostle is pressing onward eagerly; he must forget the things that are behind.

The things before;—on these his eye instinctively rests. Possibly he has some dim presentiment of that last brief agony by which, on the Ostian Road six years later, he is predestined to gain his crown. More surely, he is gazing on the heights yet to be scaled, the enemies yet to be conquered, the graces yet to be won in his secret soul, on the deepening, purifying, strengthening yet more perfectly that personal love for the Lord Who had bought him from bondage and death. That love is in very deed

the secret and the principle of his life. He is pondering how best he may win for and impart to thought, to affection, to resolve, new and ever-widening capacities; so that, as his life's stream shall ebb and his natural forces shall decay, he may be enriched within and incalculably by a secret strength that will be sent from heaven.

Who indeed shall decide what at that moment was the complete grasp and scope of this great Apostle's vision of the eternal world, upon which he has now long since entered, to gaze in uninterrupted rapture upon the throne and Face of Christ? Who shall guess how far his illuminated vision embraced the future of that Church for the triumph of which he lived and died? Who shall say how truly he measured the full impetus and range of those mighty influences which he had, as a chosen vessel, embodied and carried forward, and which, for ourselves, at this day and in this country, are the only solid ground of hope for the true Progress of man?

Our lot, brethren, is cast in an age of movement, when the pulse of life beats more quickly than in the days of our fathers. Be it so; it is the Will of God. Be it so; this restless, tossing, struggling, seething mass of life, whatever be its efforts or its direction, does but speak to a spiritual intelligence of the deep yearning of the creature for its true end in God. And therefore we Christians have no prejudices against, rather have we every sympathy for, those generous aspirations of our time which are really reconcileable with the Law and with the Truth of Christ.

Certainly all movement is not necessarily movement in the right direction; all that claims the name of Progress does not therefore necessarily deserve it. Yet in society, in government, in art, in education, in all strictly human fields of thought and speculation, there is undeniably room for Progress; precisely because man is finite and erring, and at no point of his work or of his history may truth-

fully and wisely presume that he has reached perfection. The living soul is ever growing in the Life of God. Again, the outward action of the Church upon the world, the incidental details as distinct from the divinely-ordered principles of her apostolical organization, the literature through which she impregnates an age or a country with Christian ideas, the methods by which she Christianizes education, the degree in which she commands the homage and the activities of art, the relations which she maintains with the political power, are all subjects in which progressive improvement is possible, and to be desired. For progress in love, joy, longsuffering, for progress in active intercommunion between separated sections of the Church, for progress in the great work of evangelizing the world, there is ample scope.

And if the essential faith of the Church were, as unbelievers assert, only a human speculation, it also would be subject to this law of Progress; it too might be expected to grow, or even to decompose, with the lapse of ages. But resting, as it rests, on the authority of God, it is exempt from this liability. It is a reflection in human thought of Him "with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning [c]." The surface criticism of Scripture may vary from age to age, but the main lines of interpretation, like the main verities of the faith, are far less likely to undergo change than is the sun to fail in the heavens, or the everlasting hills to melt. The Gospel as it was taught by the Apostles was a final and perfect revelation. Statements of doctrine may vary in different ages; new statements may be necessary to meet new modes of thought, or fresh forms of evasion, or virtual denials of the Original Truth. But the number of Christian doctrines cannot really be added to, nor can the area of any one Christian doctrine be in any degree

[c] St. James i. 17.

enlarged. The Athanasian formulæ only unfold logically, they do not add to, that which was in the mind of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. In the true creed of His Church, as on His throne in heaven, Jesus Christ is the Same yesterday, to-day, and for ever[d]. And how *relatively* slight are the differences which separate the three great branches of the Church from each other, nay, even the Church herself from most of the voluntary and self-organized communities of Christians around her, is well understood by those who have stood on this or that side of the yawning abyss which severs the worshippers of Jesus, truly God no less than truly Man, from those who see in Him merely one, though it be the highest of our human race.

Some, alas! there are, who, in the name of Progress, would refuse Him that adoration which He has claimed from fifty generations of Christians. They would tell you that He, the Eternal Truth, was in His day the ignorant patron of worthless and even immoral legends. Others, again, there are, who, since they no longer profess to bend the knee before Him, would fain stoop from their assumed superiority of knowledge or culture, to refashion the Sacred Form of Him Whom we meet and worship in the New Testament. They are eager to disentwine from His bleeding Brow that crown of thorns which is at once the sign of His redemptive love and of His sublime and severe morality. They would fain bring Him forth to the modern multitudes crowned with laurel or crowned with roses; since the Christ of the new theology, like some pagan god, must smile an approval upon the unbeliefs and the immoralities of the actual European world, which the Christ of the Gospel and of the Church has already condemned. Yet what is this vaunted Progress but the very triumph of a real reaction? Surely it *is* reaction against

[d] Heb. xiii. 8.

the purest Light which can lighten the human understanding, against the kindliest Love that can open and warm the human heart, against the truest Law by submission to which the human will may gain its strength and excellence. Surely it *is* reaction against the progressive work of Christ our Lord in human society, and in the human soul. A reaction assuredly, which, if it be not checked by the faith and love of Christians who hope to live and to die in the peace of Christ, will carry us back first to the uncertainties and the despair of a paganized philosophy, and then, in due time, when all that elevates man has been fairly swept away, to the ferocities and lusts of a paganized society.

And if at times our thoughts wander into these more anxious forebodings, let us be well assured that He Who reigns in heaven is Lord also of the wills and hearts of men. Let us be certain that the years to come are our own, no less, yea, rather than the years which are gone past; if we will only trust Him. If the past of England and of Europe is ours, so, if we will, ours shall be also the future of the world. For we Christians are no mere archæologists; we are men of hope; we are men of Progress.

Let us then endeavour to curb all mere feeling and unproductive demonstration, and sternly resolve to give a practical turn both to our fears and our enthusiasms. Are we endeavouring each to do his best within his own sphere, however humble and narrow, for that which we know to be the cause of Progress? Are we striving, with a view to our future work in life, to do with all our hearts our direct and obvious duties in this place? Are we true in this humble yet most certain sense to the interests of Progress? Are we longing, struggling, praying to conquer in ourselves all that retards it? Are we waging war upon selfishness, idleness, sensuality, in-

difference, frivolity, gambling, effeminacy, unbelief? Are we making a conscience of the effect of example, of the effect of conversation, of the effect of intercessory prayer? Are we less satisfied with scant and unworthy thoughts of our Great Creator, such as were almost necessarily our thoughts in boyhood, now at a time when our powers are more fully developed, now while our minds are still widening to embrace new and wider fields of knowledge? Are we substituting for the formalities and the irreverences of our childish devotions, a habit of prayer which, in its keenness and its warmth, shall be less unworthy of Him Who deigns to hear it? Are we discovering in His Scriptures and His Sacraments the treasures which have ever been so prized by the greatest of His saints and servants, and which will help us forward towards the mark of our high calling? Are we sincerely desiring to face and to dwell upon the thought of God, the thought of death, the thought of eternity? Is a personal love of, a personal devotion to our Lord and Saviour, Who has redeemed us by His atoning death, and Who loves us and blesses us, while we pray to Him in heaven, more and more the central principle of our lives? Are we, in short, anxious beyond aught else, to be humbly, earnestly, fervidly, intensely Christian?

If indeed it be so, then, by God's mercy, we are on the true line of Progress, and have fallen into the ranks of that mighty movement of redeemed humanity which, as it traverses the ages, follows the uplifted banner of the Cross, and when it would sing its hymn of human Progress, repeats instinctively the creed of the Apostles. The unknown future, the career which awaits the Church, the country, the race of man, depend, in various degrees, on our exertions, but are beyond our ken. These great concerns are hidden with God. We may leave them in His hands with hopeful confidence. But meanwhile be it

ours to "add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge [e];" to "grow up unto Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ [f];" to put forth, at His bidding and in the strength of His grace, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear [g];" to find at the last in the retrospect of a blessed experience that "the path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day [h]."

[e] 2 Pet. i. 5.
[f] Eph. iv. 15.
[g] St. Mark iv. 28.
[h] Prov. iv. 18.

SERMON III.

THE HONOUR OF HUMANITY.

1 Peter ii. 17.

Honour all men.

IT has been observed that more attention is commonly given to the specific than to the general precepts of Holy Scripture. Thus, in the verse from which my text is taken, there is a particular precept, to "honour the king," which has attracted and does attract more notice than the wider principle,—"Honour all men." The reason is this: The vast field of action which opens before us, when contemplating a general precept, is so fatiguing to the imagination, that we are tempted to give up the task of considering it in something like despair. We may have felt a like embarrassment in looking for the first time at great historical paintings, such, for instance, as those of Paolo Veronese; where the mind is distracted between the effort to master the idea of the whole, and the effort to sympathize with the action and figures in detail. Who has not hailed the relief of turning from the vague, unmanageable impression thus gained, struggling to be at once definite and comprehensive, to the sharp and clear idea which is yielded by some single face, or form, or scene? It is at first sight with morality as with art in this matter. The specific precept presents us with a single point of

duty, as to which the particulars of place, and time, and person are either stated expressly or are easily ascertained; so that there can be no mistake as to whether we obey or disregard it. The wide inclusive precept unfolds a very panorama of possible obligations, over which the eye wanders languidly in its weary effort to compass at once the full scope of the precept and the particular duties prescribed by it. Every body attaches some definite meaning to the precept of honouring the king, when occasion offers. But who shall say, at first sight, what is and what is not meant by so wide an obligation as that of honouring all men?

Nor is this the only reason for the practical disadvantages of general, as compared with specific precepts. As morality is too often taught, these general precepts are rested upon considerations too abstract, too remote from the most cogent motives to action, to exert a real influence upon average men. A general precept, like that before us, must be based on an energetic conviction, in order to give it the needful vividness and force. Now the great moral precepts of the Gospel, which are enforced by the Church of Christ, do rest upon such convictions. They do not hang in the air, like the sayings of ancient heathen sages, while men make appropriate remarks on their profundity or their beauty, and drop a conventional sigh over their unattainable range. They grow out of and rest upon fundamental and vital truths of faith,—truths into which, at each challenge to act, they strike their roots,—truths from which, in all genuine Christian souls, they draw day by day, hour by hour, their strength and their vitality.

Of this the precept before us is an eminent illustration. We only bring it down from the neglected region of moral proprieties, we only begin to understand it, we only learn its living and working power, and give it a

clothing of flesh and blood, when we place it in the light of the great Christian doctrines of which it is the practical and animated expression.

What is honour? It is, first of all, a sentiment which prompts us to acknowledge, and to do homage to, some form of truth. Like all other healthy moral movements, it must itself be based on truth; it must result from conviction. It must spring from a sense of merit of some kind in the object which provokes it; and, therefore, it must begin from within. The outward insignia of honour are a cruel mockery of their object when they do not express and illustrate a living feeling that the respect which they represent is due. Honour, then, in the first place, is a genuine movement of the soul; but, secondly, it is often a substantial expression of that movement in the outward visible world of sense. Whether it be embodied in a gesture, or in a title, or in a gift of money, it is at bottom an acknowledgment of superior worth, attaching, it may be, to an individual, or to an office, or to an institution. St. Paul tells Timothy that the presbyters who preside over churches well, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine, are to be counted worthy of double honour[a]; and there can be little doubt that he really means a double income. This income, as the word implies, is to be paid, not as a commercial equivalent for services rendered, but as an acknowledgment of ministerial worth. It is a practical expression of the sentiment of honour, quickened into activity by a worthy object.

When, then, St. Peter says that we are to "honour all men," he means, no doubt, that if opportunity arises we are to give practical expression to the disposition to honour them. But he means, first of all, that this disposition should itself exist. And it is here that we reach the point at which the need is felt of basing the precept upon

[a] 1 Tim. v. 17.

a conviction. Why should we thus be disposed to "honour all men"? That question must be answered, if at all satisfactorily, by the doctrines of the Church of Christ. For it is obvious, my brethren, that this disposition to yield honour to the whole company of our fellow-creatures, is not natural to man, being such as he is. Our first instinct is not to honour, but to depreciate our brother-men. This tendency is part of that self-assertion which, in sinners, is a leading result of the fall, and which is impatient of rivalry, even where there is no reason to fear opposition. The gentle depreciation of others is a more welcome form of self-assertion to a refined society than is the boisterous and coarse glorification of self. And, therefore, as this age depreciates the last, and this country foreign countries, and this University other Universities, and this or that college other colleges; so this individual—you or I, left to our natural instincts—depreciates other men; not men indiscriminately, but those particular classes of men who come naturally into some sort of competition with ourselves. Even in quarters where what we term advanced Liberal opinions are professed on social, political, educational, and theological questions, it is sometimes possible to discover the least generous and most depreciatory judgments of the worth and motives of others. And what is yet more humbling is that, where the law of Christ is acknowledged as a binding and imperial power, the old instinct continually reasserts itself, and Christians refuse to men in general, nay, to their brethren in Christ, that tribute of honour which is due in some sense to every human being.

It is clear that if man is left to himself, he is by no means disposed to "honour all men." Why is he bound to make head against this natural inclination?

Is it in deference to a sense of self-interest? to a belief that courtesy is a cheap thing, which if it does not make

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friends, yet keeps clear of making enemies? No! For this superficial courtesy is not honour. As it is thrown down upon the great counter of human life and intercourse, its hollow ring betrays its worthlessness, and men only do not take umbrage at such coin being tendered because it forms so large a proportion of the social currency that it cannot be dispensed with. The honour which the Apostle prescribes is not an insincere conventionalism, but a true expression of inward respect.

Are we then to honour all men in deference to the mere instinct of race? This is the answer which a great many men would give to the question before us, as a matter of course. And, perhaps, if man is but a superior kind of animal, it is the only answer that can be given. If the difference between man and the lower creatures consists only in this;—that in the course of a vast series of ages, those instincts and capacities which we see in their germinal forms distributed among the brutes around as, have been developed and trained by man into the intellectual and moral powers by which he now rules the earth;—if in short, there be no radical difference between the highest brute and the lowest man, it is hard to see why we should "honour all men." Let it be granted that the animal processes whereby man is brought into the world, and the chemical processes whereby his body dissolves at death, are in no way different from those observable in the case of the lower creatures. But if it should therefore be argued or implied that this world, this existence of birth, and flesh and blood, and decay and death, be man's all; then I fail altogether to see any substantial reason for honouring all men. You say that, at least, in this case man should honour his brother man as a reproduction of himself. Does then one brute, nay, the most intelligent of the brutes, honour other brutes? Does it appear that there is any instinct among the lower creatures—as

distinct from the instinct of association for the purposes of reproduction and mutual protection—which leads each member of a species to hold the rest of its kind in any special respect? And if man be but a cultured brute, whose old ferocities and innate sensualism are only draped by the usages and civilization of ages, it will be hard to persuade him that he ought to honour other creatures of his kind. They stand in his way; they obstruct the enjoyment of his desires; they attract the attention which he covets; they herd with the other human animals whom he admires; they eat the food which he wants. Why should he honour them? They are only rival animals, whose tastes and instincts are, in truth, just as degraded as his own.

This is the common-sense view of the invitation to "honour all men," when it is based simply upon the instinct of race. There is nothing in a second animal, who is a mere reproduction of my animal self, which properly commands this tribute of honour; while there is much in him which might incline me to refuse it. But here comes a teacher who repeats the injunction under a new formula. When I name the Positivist Philosophy, I name a system of thought more really antagonistic to Christian truth than any other in the modern world. Yet the Positivist Philosophy is honourably distinguished in two respects from some less pronounced forms of anti-Christian speculation. It is, in its own way, constructive; and it has endeavoured to elaborate and to practise a high ideal of one section of moral duty. Though it has made a clean sweep of the supernatural and, in all real senses, of the spiritual world, yet, at least, it does not mock the deepest needs of man by the cynical refusal to admit any certainties whatever. If it has discarded the certainties of faith, yet, at least, it makes much of what it calls the certainties of experience. If it has dethroned God, and

denied the immortality of the soul, yet, at least, it has felt the need of filling the void, so far as it could, with the phantoms which it has summoned from the realms of sense.

The Positive Philosophy, then, paraphrases the Christian precept "honour all men" by the formula "Worship Humanity." There is no GOD in the sense of Christendom: the God of Christendom belongs only to the theological or infantine period of human thought. Humanity is the god of Positivist thinkers; man is the highest being whom the consistent philosophy of experience can consent to recognize. Humanity is to be worshipped with the ardour of inward devotion, and, if it may be, with the appropriate splendour of a visible ritual. Man himself is the rightful, the adequate object of his love, of his aspirations, of his hopes, of his enthusiasms. Man in his collective capacity, the organism "humanity," is to be worshipped by each individual man. And from this new cultus, we are told, there is to flow forth a morality, which, in its spirit and its objects, shall be enthusiastically human; against which, as we are further assured, the inferior ethics of Christendom, weighted with the dogmatic teaching of the creeds, will struggle in vain for supremacy in the Europe of the future.

But what is the real meaning of this cultus of humanity? Is humanity an abstraction, or is it the sum total of all human beings who have lived and are living on this earth? If the former, experience is not in favour of the permanence of any enthusiasm which can be excited for a moment by an abstract unsubstantial idea. If the latter, we have at once to encounter a wholesale sacrifice of the moral sense. For to worship actual humanity is to worship, not merely love and courage, and truthfulness and purity, and disinterestedness; but hatred and cowardice, and falsehood, and grossness and selfishness. Taking humanity as an actual whole, it is to worship that, in

which the immoral decidedly preponderates over the moral, the false over the true, the bad over the good.

This doctrine is, in point of fact, only a philosophical consecration of the undiscriminating animal instinct of race; and yet it is an effort in the direction of truth, which Christianity has at once proclaimed and satisfied. For the Christian law "Honour all men" is based neither upon the instinct of selfishness nor on the instinct of race. If we consider its real motives, we shall be able to determine its spirit and its range.

I. What, then, are the motives which should lead a Christian to honour all men?

1. The first is, that all men are made in the image of God. "God created man in His Own Image, after His likeness[b]." This image and likeness consist in the fact that, first of all, man is an intelligent being, conscious of, and able steadily to reflect upon, his own existence; and, next, that his will is free. In each of these respects he is unlike any one of the lower creatures; in each he is like God. The lower creatures have a measure of intelligence; but they cannot make themselves the object of such intelligence as they possess. They take their existence for granted; they cannot turn their thought back upon itself; they cannot reflect; their thought is ever directed upon objects without them. Much more are they incapable of arriving at any thing like a theory of their own existence. And their wills, if the term may be used, drift before instinct and circumstance so entirely, as to be incapable of real moral choice. God, on the other hand, is the One Being Who ever contemplates Himself, and sustains the contemplation; Who ever acts, in conformity of course with the eternal laws of His own Being, yet thus with an unfettered freedom. Man's true position is that of a reflection among the

[b] Gen. i. 27; v. 1.

creatures of the self-contemplating and self-determining life of God. While by his lower nature man is linked to the animals around him, his higher nature associates him with all the orders of the immaterial beings above him, and it constitutes his likeness to GOD by its double endowment of intelligence and freedom.

Man as man is intelligent and free. He is not merely an animal organism endowed with life; he is a spirit capable of comprehending the significance of its own existence, capable of knowing the Author of its being, capable of freely deciding to obey or to defy Him.

This is the first great reason for honouring all men. All men are endued with an immortal, conscious, self-determining principle of life. Or rather that principle is each man's true self, around which all else that belongs to him is clustered, and to which it stands in the relation of a property, or it may be of an accident.

What need is there to say, brethren, that to the mass of men, this elementary truth is practically unknown? They know much of society around them, much of its rules and laws and tendencies, much, it may be, of the outward universe, much of the various subjects which concern and diversify man's material well-being on the surface of this planet. But they carry within themselves that which is more wonderful than any thing which meets their eye; and of it they know nothing. They think indeed and resolve; but it is, as if they were imitating the lower creatures, without reflection, and in the way of instinct and routine; they do not consider what is really involved in these vast powers of thought and resolution. That the inward life from which their whole mental and moral action proceeds is made in GOD'S image, and is destined as such to a futurity beyond the grave, is a truth which, generally and practically, is shrouded from them by mists of intellectual blindness and moral weakness. And what they do not

see in themselves, they do not see in others. Other men are, in their eyes, not immortal spirits, moving round them, robed in a drapery of flesh and blood; but mere forces or counters with which they have to deal, and of which they think habitually only so far as such forces may bear on their own daily life of thought and feeling and purpose.

Now it was one great object and result of the ministry of our LORD, that it revealed to man his true dignity. Jesus Christ always dealt with men as being what they are. He did not fix His eye upon dress, or income, or position, or bodily mien and form; His glance pierced straight through to the personality, the character, the spirit within. To Him, Pilate, Herod, Nicodemus, the rich young man, the woman of Samaria, the Magdalen, were not merely high office, royalty, learning, wealth, degradation, social disfranchisement. They were these in the eyes of common men, but before Jesus Christ they were each and all immortal spirits, in varying states of spiritual life or disease; and the outward distinctions, which made them what they were in the social world of Palestine, were before Him as if they did not exist, except so far as such distinctions might enhance or detract from personal responsibility.

This is the meaning of our Lord's constant violation of worldly standards of social propriety; He sacrifices them to the higher demands of man's real dignity. He attends the feast given by the converted publican to his friends and acquaintances; He permits the woman that is a sinner to wash His feet; He lingers in conversation with her of Samaria, whose career of vice was so well known to Him; He will not tarry to see His Mother and His brethren, since He finds near relatives in all that do the will of GOD; He calls Herod a fox; He weeps over Jerusalem. Pharisees condemn Him in language of grave surprise; disciples are baffled and cannot understand Him.

But He goes on His way, revealing man's true self to man; proclaiming that it matters little if the whole world be gained and the true life be lost; proclaiming that if the inwardly-apprehended kingdom of Righteousness be really sought, all the outward accidents of man's passing existence will, in the highest sense, be added to it. And therefore it is that, since the days of Jesus Christ, Christians, so far as they have been Christians indeed, have honoured in all men, that possession of the image of GOD which is man's real inalienable self. For Christ had taught them its significance and beauty by His precepts; and yet He had done more than this; He had taught them its inestimable worth by His bitter death.

2. Our Lord's Death upon the Cross is a second reason for honouring all men. His death was indeed a true sacrifice offered to the Justice and Majesty of GOD: but it was also an act of homage and honour to the worth of the human spirit. Certainly, in order to understand this, we must believe in very truth that He who suffered on Calvary is truly God. If He were a mere man, then so far would His death be from having any atoning virtue, that it may be fairly questioned, nay, it has been questioned, whether such a death was not morally indefensible, as being in fact an act of voluntary self-destruction; since He might have avoided the encounter with Jewish opinion which more immediately precipitated the action of the Sanhedrim. But being, as He is, Very and Eternal GOD, He imparted to His passive as to His active obedience a priceless value; and He wrought out, in intention, the salvation of the whole race of men, when He hung dying upon the Tree of Shame. He did not die only for the elect; He died for all. And yet His world-embracing intention neither put force upon the wills of men, nor was independent of their willingness to be saved by Him. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth

live unto themselves[c]." "There is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all[d]." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our sins[e]."

And therefore it is that at the foot of the Cross we learn the honour which is due to all men. It was to enlighten the conscience of man, it was to purify man's soul from the stains, and to free it from the burden of sin, it was to restore man to his true and native dignity among the first-born of Creation, that our Saviour died. His anguish of spirit, His night of insults and of shame, His weary bearing of the instrument of His death, the spitting, the buffeting, the Crown of Thorns, the wounds, the words, each and all, which He uttered upon the Cross, are one long testimony to the truth enforced by His Apostle;—that man, under all circumstances, man in his utmost degradation, man as man, is to be honoured among Christians by a homage which will even express itself in the sacrifice of the holiest of lives.

3. From these two motives a Christian will gather a third, which must lead him to honour all men, both in feeling and in act. I refer to the capacity of every man, be he who or what he may, while in this world, for improvement, for goodness. This generous faith in humanity is a creation of the Gospel. It is not that the Gospel condescends to flatter man; it alone, among all religions, dares to tell him the full truth about himself and his destiny. It tells him that he has fallen; and, at first sight, this announcement might seem fatal to the encouragement of such hopes as I am describing. But the Fall of Man consists rather in the privation of God's supernatural grace than in a positive corruption of all his faculties, such as has been imagined by some modern divines; and as the

[c] 2 Cor. v. 15. [d] 1 Tim. ii. 5. [e] 1 St. John ii. 1, 2.

doctrine was understood by the Ancient Church, the Fall left human nature dismantled indeed, but something less than a shapeless ruin. Adam could not transmit the grace which he had forfeited and which the Second Adam could alone restore; but in each of Adam's children the Divine image was still traceable, in its twofold features of intelligence and freedom, although the one was darkened and the other impaired.

And now, that which brightens the hereditary and the actual condition of mankind in the eyes of a Christian is the gift of His grace by the ascended Christ. Socinianism has contrived to empty the idea of grace of its whole value, by representing it as a mere inoperative 'favour' towards His creatures on the part of the Supreme Being; whereas, in reality, it is in the spiritual world as real an agent as is electricity, for example, in the world of matter. Grace is the actual communication of Christ's quickening Manhood —the recreative principle of the New Covenant—by the agency of the Spirit, chiefly through the medium of the Sacraments, to the souls and bodies of His members. It is this stupendous gift which at once discovers and stimulates man's capacity for an existence, in which humanity will be really what, apart from Christ, it is only in idea.

The glory, the sinlessness, the ineffable Majesty of the Ascended Christ is therefore the measure of the hopes of man. Throned above the highest intelligences of heaven, adored by all that is purest, and strongest, and wisest, in the Universe of GOD, the Sacred Manhood of the Lord Jesus gives a point to our enthusiasm on behalf of our race. We Christians accept the taunt of an ancient heresy; we are *ἀνθρωπολάτραι*. We can worship Humanity without violating our moral sense, without feeling that we are wronging GOD, or worshipping a dead abstraction; we adore man's nature in Jesus, the Holy, Harmless, Undefiled One, who is Most High in the glory of GOD the Father.

And from that throne of His in the highest heavens there descends upon the race which He has ennobled, and which He yearns to glorify and to save, an interest, a radiance in Christian eyes, an inheritance of a title to honour, which has made the precept of the Apostle one of the main factors of the moral life of Christendom.

II. But is the precept to be understood literally? Does "all men" mean all members, all classes of the human family?

Let me ask, in return, Why not? Let us look at some of the barriers which have been raised against man's universal right to honour by the prejudices of man.

1. There is, first of all, and, morally speaking, lowest of all, the barrier of wealth. Wealth honours wealth; income pays respect to income; but it is wont to cherish, in its secret heart, an unmeasured contempt for poverty. This barrier is apt to be raised to a great height by the successful classes in a commercial country; till at last wealth comes to be almost identified with virtue, and poverty with vice. If it were only meant that labour which produces wealth is virtue, and that idleness which creates poverty is vice, there would be no ground for dissent. But the feeling of a plutocracy is something very different from this; it is the possession of wealth and of the social power which is conferred by wealth, which constitutes, according to this standard, the title to honour. To believe that a man with £60 a year is just as much deserving of respect as a man with £6000, you must be seriously a Christian. A philosophical estimate of men and things is not really proof against the inroads of the sentiment which makes the possession of mere income the standard of honour. We have only to recall the feelings with which bible clerks and servitors have been heretofore regarded in Oxford; we have only to reflect upon the scope and spirit of arguments which are constantly put forward even

now, against recognizing "poverty-qualifications" for educational privileges—as if likeness to our Lord's outward condition in this world was to count for a disgrace among His followers—in order to be satisfied that the honour of income, as distinct from and opposed to the honour of man, is still a real antagonist, which disputes the ground, inch by inch, with the ethics of the Gospel. Do not misunderstand me. Wealth has its necessary privileges, as, much more, it has its responsibilities. But to refuse honour to an immortal spirit, because here in its state of probation, it is not encrusted with material wealth, implies a failure to apprehend the true dignity of life so prodigious, that I must not attempt to characterize it. Rather let me ask you to consider what was meant by our Lord's words of counsel to the rich young man.

2. A second barrier is the spirit of station or of class, founded whether upon success in life, or upon the circumstances of birth. That an aristocracy has, in God's providential government of society, distinct and great functions to perform, is a position which is not for one moment to be denied; since the experience of history seems to show that society creates a higher class by a natural process, and we in England know how largely such a class may, if it will, serve its country. But when it developes an exclusive spirit, which divides humanity into two sections, those within and those without the imaginary barrier, it comes into collision with the teaching of the Gospel. Certainly this spirit is frequently found in its greatest intensity, not so much among those who succeed to high station by the inheritance of birth, as among those who have secured it, whether by unforeseen circumstances, or by secret influence, or by personal exertion, and who too often have seemed to view indulgence in self-assertion as the real charm of their new position. But in any case such a spirit is a repudiation

of man's true title to honour. The Divine Image, expressed in man's intelligence and freedom; the Atoning Blood, giving the measure of man's preciousness in the eyes of God; the glorified Manhood of Jesus, revealing to man his capacity for glory;—these are the privileges of no class or station; they are the right and the possession of humanity.

3. A third barrier is that of race or country. Patriotism, no doubt, has its providential purpose; and the instinct of race is but an expansion of the instinct of the family. Both are based upon a natural foundation and have a Divine sanction; but in their exaggeration both may foster sentiments which are crimes against humanity. From our insular position, we English have in past years been disposed to intensify the healthy sentiment of patriotism into a vulgar prejudice against all foreigners as such. It was the bitter sneer of Voltaire that the English thought that GOD had become incarnate for the Anglo-Saxon race. And if this exclusiveness is giving way beneath the influences of culture and travel, it is no credit to our Christianity that it has not done so before.

But those who have ceased to think that honour should be refused to Frenchmen or to Germans, still erect, at a further distance from home, barriers which exclude even large majorities of the human family from the tribute of honour. Sometimes it is European civilization; sometimes, as with Positivism, it is a fraction of that civilization arbitrarily denominated "the West;" sometimes it is "Europe, and America, and the Colonies" which are to bound our respectful sympathies. And physiology and philology are implored to bring their reluctant succour to the instinct of exclusion, by pronouncing that this or that race of men is a race of essentially distinct animals, with whom it is impossible to deal as being seriously members of the human family. It is only one step further to deny

to such races all human rights, to handle them as property that may be bought and sold, to treat them as we treat the animals around us, to bid them consider it their noblest privilege to be hewers of wood and drawers of water to our higher necessities.

Against this inhuman, this accursed spirit, the Church of Jesus must ever utter her emphatic protest; she must ever brave the cynicism and contempt of those who would honour not man, but mere material civilization and organized society and pride of race; she must ever range herself side by side with the lowest types, so to term them, of the human family; and in her Master's name, bid the races who are what they are, only in consequence of the training which she has lavished on them for centuries, to learn the full meaning of the Creation and of the Cross, and to "honour all men."

When we hear of the African savage who a few months since floated his canoe in a lake of human blood, that he might fitly observe his father's obsequies, we may for a moment look hard at the precept to honour all men. Yet, all crime being, in the eyes of Absolute Justice, strictly relative to opportunities, it may well be that this Pagan prince stands higher before heaven than do you or I, when we lose our tempers in conversation, or say our prayers without thinking of the solemn work in which we are engaged.

4. The absence of intelligence is often held to constitute a fourth barrier against this honour of man as man. Many who are indifferent to wealth and station cannot bring themselves to respect the unintellectual. They will not honour any thing human that does not take its place at the marriage-feast of intellect. Dulness is the one heresy which merits excommunication: brilliancy, even the most superficial, is like the charity of the New Testament; it avails to cover a multitude of sins.

If, indeed, by the honour of intelligence be meant the honour paid to cultivation of the mental faculties, such honour is in the highest sense legitimate, since it is really paid to those moral qualities which are inseparable from work. Only it ought also in consistency to be paid to the peasant who cannot read, and who day by day earns an honest livelihood by the sweat of his brow. If by intelligence be meant the original gift of GOD's image in reason, talent, or genius, which has been developed in this case by opportunities, while in that case it has lain unavoidably dormant, the honour paid to it is really paid to the opportunities, not to the endowment itself. The lowest savages possess in an undeveloped form the powers which charm the most cultivated minds in Europe; and if the original endowment be the object of honour, it should be honoured, whether it be developed or not. To make intelligence, in the sense of cultivated intellect, the real test of a claim to honour, would secure such honour to Voltaire, and (may we not add?) to Satan, while denying it to the Apostles of Christ. To make intelligence, in the sense of the common faculty which is capable of reflecting on self and of knowing GOD, the ground of that claim, is to own that a debt of honour is due to the whole human family.

The precept before us, however, is not adverse to our recognizing the specific titles to honour which individuals or classes may possess. It only insists upon a broader basis of such right to honour than that which any of these titles suggest. It is entirely in harmony with the honourable recognition of moral worth, because moral worth enriches and intensifies what is best in humanity, namely, the freedom and power of man's will. It does not force us to condone either the wilful propagation of error or the guilt of crime. It does not imply indifference to the interests either of truth or virtue. Suppose that we take St. Paul's advice, and "reject a man that is an

heretic after the first and second admonition[f]," do we therefore neglect St. Peter's injunction to honour all men? Surely not. What is it that we reject? The error surely, not the man. We may even honour the man while rejecting the error; we may honour him in spite of the error; we may think the best of him we can, and yet feel it a duty to truth to dissociate ourselves from him. Suppose, again, that society, acting on a Divine sanction and in self-defence, takes the life of a murderer. Here, at any rate you say, in this death of ignominy and pain, there is a limit to the honour of humanity. The criminal, you urge, has forfeited human rights, and society cannot draw fine distinctions between the repression of crime and the punishment of the offender. But the Church waits at the foot of the scaffold, that she may honour in its last agony the freedom and the intelligence of a human soul. It may be necessary that the culprit should forfeit his life: but it may also be true that the real guilt is, in the eyes of a higher Equity, shared between the criminal and society at large. Society, by its prevailing tone of lax morality, and by its unchristian neglect of responsibilities towards the ignorant and the poor, has helped to produce the crime, though its instinct of self-protection forces it to smite the hand that actually did the deed. The Church represents, in some sort, the Eternal Justice, and persists in honouring where society has condemned. Even in the extreme case of madness, when all that marks the moral and mental life of the soul has been darkened or paralyzed, Christians have felt that even a special honour is due to the sad wreck of humanity. Christian charity has been prodigal of a peculiar and tender respect for an affliction, which, if it involves a lifelong dislocation of faculties, does not of itself imply the final ruin of a spiritual being.

[f] Tit. iii. 10.

It is not a little remarkable, that this very Epistle, which bids us "honour all men," is one of the five Apostolic Epistles containing directions to slaves respecting their duties to their masters. At first sight, there seems an intrinsic incompatibility between the precept, and such an indirect sanction of an institution which was its standing violation. But this incompatibility is rather apparent than real. If the Apostles did not provoke the horrors of a social revolution by at once proscribing slavery; if they left it to die,—a lingering death, it is true,—at the hands of the generations to come, penetrated by a sense of its violation of the law of Christ, and of the rights of man;—this was because they felt themselves in possession of a principle so strong, that it would purge slavery of its worst evils, before destroying it. That principle was the dignity of man, created in God's image, and redeemed by Christ. Conscious of this dignity, the slave could rejoice to copy the humiliations of the Divine Master Who had really ennobled him. Conscious of this dignity, the master could not but respect his slave, as a brother in Christ, side by side with whom he too was himself waiting for judgment. In the presence of these sublime realities, the outward inequalities of life fade away from the soul's sight: the eye is fixed only upon that which does not change. A few years of service or of command are equally unimportant to a being who has Eternity clearly before him, and who measures human greatness by the standards which it supplies.

III. The practical bearings of this suggestive precept are so numerous that it will be necessary to confine ourselves to the following, by way of conclusion.

1. "Honour all men" is a fitting motto for the spirit of much of our study in this place. Whatever may have been of late years, whatever may be in years to come, the modifications introduced into our educational course, it

cannot be doubted that to the school of *Literæ Humaniores* there must always be assigned a place of special importance. How full of meaning is the title of that school! It carries us back to the close of the Middle Ages. It expresses the rising reaction against that scholastic method which had penetrated into and stiffened all departments of human thought. It represents a craving for, or a new admiration of, a literature, more human in its interests than were the dialectics, in which the substance of thought and feeling had seemed to evaporate in the culture of intellectual form. It embodies the conviction that in the works of the historians, the orators, and the poets of antiquity, the minds and hearts of men were laid bare with a breadth and fulness which must ever make them worthy objects of the closest human study. If there is much in these writers with which no Christian can sympathize, much which degrades and brutalizes human nature; yet St. Basil had pointed out that they afforded that special preparation for the study of the faith which is needed by those who would effectively show how it meets the sympathies and wants of man. If, from the thirteenth century onwards, in consequence of an educational movement of like nature to that which took place in Imperial Rome during the second century, the "humanities" had fallen into discredit; yet in earlier ages, throughout those great schools of the Benedictine Order with which are associated the names of St. Boniface, and Alcuin, and Rhabanus Maurus, and Venerable Bede, they had been cultivated with the utmost enthusiasm. It may be a natural wish in those who are looking forward to serving God in Holy Orders to desire to abandon the study of Pagan writers, and to live in an intellectual atmosphere, fed by the words of Holy Scripture, and by the great Teachers of the Ancient Church. But, in truth, like the Jewish law, the Greek and Latin classics are a pedagogue

whose especial duty it is to lead us down to the school of Christ. They show us the human soul in the freshness and beauty and strength of nature, yet also in the weakness and degradation which must mark the absence of grace. If there is much in them to regret, there is much more to admire; if none of them, not even the purest of the Stoic moralists, can approve himself absolutely to a Christian judgment, yet they all, in different degrees, are marked by that beauty and meaning which belong to every thing truly human, and which we honour in our tribute of honour to man.

2. "Honour all men." Here is the Christian rule for social intercourse. Honour high station; honour authority; honour genius; honour courage; honour even success, if you will; but do not limit your honour to these things. If you honour the representative men of humanity, those who embody and intensify its great qualities or interests, do not forget that that which you honour in them is shared in a measure by all.

If, indeed, our intercourse with each other were constantly penetrated by the recollection of what we really are and of the respect which is due to the sanctities of the soul's life, how different would it be! Not necessarily less bright and genial; but certainly more earnest, more thorough, more full of meaning. As it is, we too often retain the forms of Christian courtesy, while we have lost the sense of their power. How altered, too, would be our bearing towards servants and social inferiors, who in fact superadd, in addition to other titles to honour, that of correspondence, in the circumstances of their outward life, to the condition of Our Lord Himself. If only we could see in all with whom we deal, beings who, like ourselves, are for a brief while on their trial, and who share with us the awfulness and the blessedness of existence; how vivid and keen, how tender withal, how full of attention and

respect would be not merely our outward manner, but our inmost feelings towards them!

Nor can I refrain from saying that, in the days which are opening upon us in England, we shall find this social spirit, eminently Christian and ever obligatory as it is, nothing less than a political necessity. If in the new distribution of power among our countrymen in years to come, we are to escape from collisions of class with class, leading on, it may be, even to revolutionary violence, it must be, under GOD, by an earnest effort on the part of those who represent the higher orders of society to cultivate and to practise a deeper, more earnest respect for human beings as such. It is upon your determination in this matter, my brethren, more than upon that of the representatives of any other class in this country, that our future depends. In the absence of this spirit, an old society like that of England, based on feudal and Tudor traditions, must obviously have very much to fear; with its increase, we have assuredly every thing to hope.

3. Lastly, in this precept we may discover the true spirit of Christian works of mercy. All the plans which Christian charity really devises and sets on foot are based on the principle of respect for man. Christian charity refuses to deal with human beings like counters and in masses; she leaves it to other agencies to sweep the refuse poverty of society into its workhouses, and its refuse labour into the hold of an emigrant ship; while note is taken of each unit only so far as is needful in order to secure the accuracy of the official return, and to supply his data to the statistician. Christian charity relieves poverty, not as conferring a favour, but as satisfying what is in some sense a right;—the right of humanity to live, and to ask in GOD'S name at the hands of property the means of livelihood. Christian charity refuses to acquiesce in the inhuman dogma that men or races are incurably bad or

degraded; she treats the lowest as still bearing within, the stamp of the Divine Likeness, as still capable, through supernatural grace, of the highest elevation[g]. She bends respectfully to tend the foulest wounds; she kneels upon the pavement side by side with the Eternal Christ, that she may wash the feet which have been soiled in traversing the wastes of time; she bows herself to the very earth that she may "take the sinner out of the dust, and lift the beggar from the dunghill" and then "set him with the princes, even with the princes of the people[h]" of Christ. Especially, in the little ones who fill her schools she respects and tends the image of GOD, and that sprinkling of the Holy Blood, which has not yet been forfeited. But whether she instructs the young, or feeds the hungry, or clothes the naked, or provides labour for the unemployed, or offers shelter to the homeless, or an asylum to the deranged, or a refuge where the fallen may find aids to rise, or a bed where the sick may die in peace, tended by the hand of love,—every where she stands before humanity, not as a patroness, but as might a loving and faithful servant, who is too loyal, too enamoured of her master's name and birthright, to be other than affectionate and respectful in the hour of his poverty and his shame.

Associate yourselves then, dear brethren, with this sublime charity of the Church. Endeavour during this season of discipline and repentance to give a practical turn to the honour which you owe to all men. Honour, indeed, those for whom you can do nothing in the way of outward service; honour your betters in Church and State, your superiors in acquirements or in station; but honour also the poor, the fallen, the sick, the ignorant. Honour these, if not in person, at least by proxy. There are penitentiaries, hospitals, schools around, where an unmercenary

[g] Gal. iii. 27, 28. [h] Ps. cxiii. 7, 8.

love, which money can neither create nor buy, relieves human wants, bodily and spiritual, in the name of Christ, and therefore with the tenderness of respect. Assist some one of these works of mercy, by denying yourselves something that you will really miss; so that when Easter comes you may have part in that joy whose sweetness is proportioned to the Sacrifice that precedes it—a Sacrifice offered to GOD, in the interests and for the honour of man.

SERMON IV.

THE FREEDOM OF THE SPIRIT.

2 Cor. iii. 17.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

IN the confessedly difficult passage which precedes these words, the Apostle is contrasting the ministry of the Law with that of the Gospel. The glory of the legal ministry had shone forth in rays of light, visible to the eye of sense, from the countenance of the great Lawgiver, as he descended from the Mountain of Revelation. "The children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance[a]." But the glory thus symbolized was of an altogether inferior order to that of the New Covenant. As a rule of life, without the Atoning Blood to pardon sin and without the grace of the Spirit to make obedience possible, the Law had been but a ministration of condemnation. As a typical system, it had been destined to pass away on the appearance of the Antitype which fulfilled it. In either respect it contrasted disadvantageously with the Gospel, which was at once endowed with perpetuity and a ministration of spiritual righteousness. Hence there was an important difference between the mental and spiritual perceptions of the Jew and those of the Christian. Moses had veiled his

[a] 2 Cor. iii. 7.

face, it was true; because "when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw that the skin of his face shone, they were afraid to come nigh him[b]." But, according to the Apostle, the immediate motive of this act did not exhaust its far-reaching significance. The veil did not merely shroud the "glory" of the law from the eyes of the terrified Israelites. It also protected the early dispensation from a too penetrating scrutiny, which might have revealed in the very history of its introduction a Higher Object beyond itself. "Moses put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished[c]." More than fifteen centuries had passed since the revelation of Sinai, but in the days of St. Paul the face of Moses was still shrouded from the eyes of Israel. The Tallith, used during prayer and the reading of the Law, perpetuated the symbol in every synagogue. And that which met the eye too truly pictured the spiritual fact which the eye could not reach. "Even unto this day when Moses is read the vail is upon their hearts[d]." The darkness, however, was not to last. "When it [the heart of the people] shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." This was the promise. It is explained by the assertion that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty[e]." For the Spirit of the Lord dwells with all who are really converted to Christ, since "the Lord is That Spirit." In other words, to possess the Lord Jesus Christ is to possess the Holy Ghost, Who is the Minister and Guardian of Christ's Presence in the soul. The immediate and practical conclusion is, that those who are converted to Jesus Christ, have escaped from the veil which darkened the spiritual intelligence of Israel. The converting Spirit is the source of positive illumination; but before He enlight-

[b] Exod. xxxiv. 30.
[c] 2 Cor. iii. 13.
[d] 2 Cor. iii. 15.
[e] Ibid. iii. 16, 17.

ens thus, He must give freedom from the veil of prejudice which denies to Jewish thought the exercise of any real insight into the deeper sense of Scripture. That sense is seized by the Christian student of the ancient Law, because in the Church of Jesus Christ he possesses the Spirit; and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

In this interpretation of the passage some hesitation may be felt as to the construction of the words, "The Lord is that Spirit." According to St. Chrysostom, the three Greek fathers who follow him, our own Bishop Pearson[f], and others, "the Spirit" is here the subject, and "the Lord" the predicate of the proposition; which thus becomes an assertion of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. But this construction would seem to detach the words too violently from their preceding context, to which they plainly stand in the relation of an explanation. On the other hand, "the Spirit" (*τὸ πνεῦμα*), explained as it is by the following *τὸ πνεῦμα Κυρίου*, cannot mean merely the sense, mind, drift of the Law, or of the Gospel, or any thing else or less than the personal Holy Ghost Himself. And the preceding verse is decisive in obliging us to understand by "the Lord," Jesus Christ our Saviour[g]. "The Lord Jesus Christ is that Spirit." But the Catholic Creeds, not to mention other passages of Holy Scripture itself, forbid us to recognize here any assertion of absolute personal identity. Moreover, the law of the copula does not compel us to adopt a construction which would imply such an assertion. The point of view of the whole passage is so plain as to have made a more accurate expres-

[f] Pearson on the Creed, i. 374. The Socinian theologians against whom Pearson wrote were right in referring *ὁ Κύριος* to our Lord Jesus Christ, but wrong in the inference which they based on it. Their interpretation of *τὸ πνεῦμα* was as uncritical as it was rationalistic. Cf. Meyer in loc.

[g] Verse 16, "When it [the heart of the people] shall turn to the Lord," i. e. to the Lord Jesus Christ, by conversion to His Gospel.

sion unnecessary[h]. To have communion with Christ is to have communion with the Holy Spirit, and communion with the Holy Spirit is freedom. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the living principle of His indwelling and of His action, both in the soul and in the Church. He is called the Spirit of Christ, because He is sent by Christ, and for the purpose of endowing us with Christ's Nature and Mind, and of knitting us into the unity of His sacred Body, as in other ways, so pre-eminently through the Sacraments. His presence does not supersede the Presence of Christ: He co-operates in, He does not work apart from, the mediatorial work of Christ. To regard the workings of the Holy Ghost as altogether separate from the mediatorial actions of the Redeemer, would be "to suppose that there is some other name than that of Christ given under Heaven, whereby we might be saved[i]." If Christ is the Head of the Holy Body, the Eternal Spirit is that living Soul by which the members of the Body are bound together[k]. To possess the Holy Spirit is to possess Christ; to have lost the Holy Spirit is to have lost Christ. Accordingly our Lord speaks of the Gift of Pentecost as if It were His own second coming: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you[l]." And after telling the

[h] Cf. Meyer in loc.: "Der Herr....zu welchem sich das Herz bekehrt (beachte den Artikel) ist nicht verschieden vom heiligen Geist, welcher nämlich in der Bekehrung empfangen wird. Dass diess nicht von absoluter, persönlicher Identität, sondern nach dem Gesichtspunkte gemeint sei, dass die Gemeinschaft Christi, in welche man durch die Bekehrung tritt, die Gemeinschaft des Heiligen Geistes ist, verstand sich dem Glaubensbewusstsein der Leser von selbst, und wird auch durch das folgende τὸ πνεῦμα Κυρίου ausser Zweifel gesetzt. Christus ist aber in so fern der Geist, als Er bei der Bekehrung und sonst im Geiste sich mittheilt, und der heilige Geist Sein Geist, das lebendige Princip der Wirksamkeit und Einwohnung Christi ist."

[i] Wilberforce on the Incarnation, 3rd ed., 8vo, p. 287.

[k] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. 27. Eph. i. 22, 23; v. 23.

[l] St. John xiv. 18.

Romans that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His," St. Paul adds, "Now if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin[m]." Here Christ's "being in" the Christian, and the Christian's "having the Spirit of Christ," are equivalent terms. In like manner, as our Lord had taught the Jews, "If the *Son* shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed[n];" so here His Apostle says of the Spirit Who administers His kingdom and perpetuates His Presence, "Where the *Spirit* of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The specific liberty which is here more particularly in question, consisted in the "taking away of the vail," which had hidden from the Jew the deeper, that is the Christian, sense of the Old Testament. It is not merely liberty from the yoke of the law. It is liberty from the tyranny of obstacles which cloud the spiritual sight of truth. It is liberty from spiritual rather than intellectual dulness; it is liberty from a state of soul which cannot apprehend truth. The Eternal Spirit still gives this liberty. He gave it, in the first age of the Gospel, to those Jews whom, like St. Paul himself, He led to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

But the text covers a much larger area than is required for the particular conclusion to which it is a premise. It is the enunciation of a master-feature of the Gospel. It proclaims a great first principle which towers high above the argument, into which it is introduced for the purpose of proving a single point[o]. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Freedom is not an occasional largess of the Divine Spirit; it is not merely a reward for high

[m] Rom. viii. 9, 10. [n] St. John viii. 36.

[o] So Meyer insists that the Ap. is speaking of "geistige Freiheit überhaupt, ohne specielle Beschränkung" (in loc.). He certainly means something more than "deliverance from the bondage of the Mosaic law."—*Essays on a Liberal Education*, p. 343.

services or conspicuous devotion. It is the invariable accompaniment of the Spirit's true action. Or rather, it is the very atmosphere of His Presence. Wherever He really is, there is also freedom. He does not merely strike off the fetters of some narrow national prejudice, or of some antiquated ceremonialism. He does not descend from Heaven to subvert an earthly despotism. He comes not that He may provide for "the freedom of man's outward individual action, consistently with the safety of human society." His mission is not to bestow an external, political, social freedom. For no political or social emancipation can give real liberty to an enslaved soul. And no tyranny of the state or of society can enslave a soul that has been really freed [p]. Nor is the freedom which He sheds abroad in Christendom a poor reproduction of the restless, volatile, self-asserting, sceptical temper of Pagan Greek life, adapted to the forms and thoughts of modern civilization, and awkwardly expressing itself in Christian phraseology. If He gives liberty, it is in the broad, deep sense of that word. At His bidding, the inmost soul of man has free play; it moves hither and thither; it rises heavenward, like the lark, as if with a buoyant sense of unfettered life and power. This liberty comes with the gift of truth [q]; it comes along with that gift, of which in its fulness the Eternal Spirit is the only Giver [r]. He gives freedom from error for the reason; freedom from constraint for the affections; freedom for the will from the tyranny of sinful and human wills. Often has human nature imagined for itself such a freedom as this; it has sketched the outlines more or less accurately; it has sighed in vain for the reality. Such freedom is, in fact, a creation of grace: the sons of God alone enjoy it. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

On this day "the Holy Church throughout the world

[p] 1 Cor. vii. 22. [q] St. John viii. 32. [r] Ibid. xiv. 26.

doth" specially "acknowledge" and adore "the Holy Ghost the Comforter," as the Peer and Equal, in His Divine Personality, of the Only-Begotten Son, and of the Everlasting Father. To-day especially we remember how in His condescension He became a gift to man, in order that through His blessed Presence we might be free. May He deign to enable us to dwell reverently and truthfully on that freedom which He bestows, as an essential feature of our Pentecostal heritage! May we learn to prize highly or earnestly to long after this great gift, which it is still and for ever His office and His good pleasure to shed abroad in all its reality and beauty upon the great family of His regenerate children!

The natural images which are used in Holy Scripture to set forth the presence and working of the Holy Spirit are, in different ways, suggestive of the freedom which He bestows upon the soul. The Dove[s], which pictures His gentle movement on the soul and in the Church, suggests also the power of rising at will above the dead level of the soil into a higher region where it is at rest[t]. The "cloven tongue like as of fire[u]" is at once light and heat; and light and heat imply ideas of the most unrestricted freedom. What freer than the light, of which the many-coloured rays, with their unequal undulations, dart through space with the same astonishing velocity? What more calculated to exhibit a natural picture of the penetrating action of Spirit in our active life, than the singular transformations whereby, through well-known experiments, heat is first resolved into mechanical force, and then mechanical force or motion are again rendered back into equivalent heat? "The wind" blowing "where it listeth, while thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth[x];" the well of water in the

[s] St. Matt. iii. 16.
[t] Ps. lv. 6.
[u] Acts ii. 3.
[x] St. John iii. 8.

soul, springing up, like a perpetual fountain, unto everlasting life[y]; such are our Lord's own chosen symbols of the Pentecostal Gift. Do not these figures speak, in a language intelligible to all, not merely of a mysterious endowment, but also of a buoyant self-expanding life; of that range of thought, and joy of heart, and impulse and strength of will, which is the positive side of the gift of freedom? The light, the heat, the wind, the stream of water, are images not merely of the Divine force which acts upon the soul, but of the movement of the soul itself, as spiritualized and transformed by the Heavenly Visitant.

And these figures prepare us for the language of the Apostles when they are tracing the results of the great Pentecostal gift in the Christian soul, or in the Christian Church. With St. James, the Christian no less than the Jew has to obey a law, but the Christian law is "a law of liberty[z]." The will of the Christian, regenerate and free, rejoices to obey it. With St. Paul, the Church of Christ, the true mother of mankind, is the Jerusalem which is "free[a];" she is contrasted with the bondwoman, whose children Christians are not[b]; the Christian is to stand fast in a liberty with which Christ has freed him[c]: he is free from the "yoke of bondage" which was imposed by the Synagogue. He is, if indeed he is alive unto God, free from a yet heavier yoke; he is "made free from sin, and become the servant of righteousness[d]." St. Paul compares this freedom, "the glorious liberty of the children of God," with the "bondage of corruption[e];" he contrasts the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which gives us Christians our freedom, with the enslaving "law of sin and death[f]." According to St. Paul, the Christian slave

y Ibid. iv. 14.
z St. James ii. 12: cf. i. 25.
a Gal. iv. 26.
b Ibid. 31.
c Gal. v. 1.
d Rom. vi. 18.
e Ibid. viii. 21.
f Rom. viii 2.

is essentially free, even while he still wears his chains[g]. The New Testament every where represents the gift of freedom as of the essence of the Gospel. Freedom of thought, which voluntarily submits to absolute truth; freedom of affection, which hastens to embrace the Eternal Beauty; freedom of will, which yet moves harmoniously with and in submission to the Will of Him "Whose service is perfect freedom." For "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

I. The kingdom of the Spirit, then, is the home of mental liberty. From the first God has consecrated liberty of thought, by withdrawing thought from the control of society. Society protects our persons and goods, and passes judgment upon our words and actions. But it cannot force the sanctuary of our thought. That mysterious world which lies open to God and to conscience can only be revealed to our fellow-men by our own voluntary act. And He Who came from heaven to-day that He might enrich the human soul by His Blessed Presence, raising it to new and supernatural capacities, came not to suspend, but to recognize, to carry forward, to expand, and to fertilize almost indefinitely the thought of man. He has vindicated for human thought the liberty of its expression against imperial tyranny, and official superstition. The blood of those saints and martyrs of the first three centuries, whose names live for ever in the heart of the grateful Church, witnessed to the truth, that, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is, not merely moral, but mental liberty. For when the illumination of the Perfect Truth had been shed by the gift of Pentecost upon human thought, Christians became conscious of a new power, almost of the presence of a new sense, in their perception of the supernatural. The thought which God had thus admitted to share after a

[g] 1 Cor. vii. 22.

measure His counsels and His Mind could not but be free.

In other days, other features of the Church's system, the severe morality of the Gospel, the organic structure of the hierarchy, the unalterable principles or the consecrated traditions of the life and worship of the Church's children, have been separately arraigned as the foes of liberty. The main currents of human interest have for the most part swept past the bed of these now wellnigh antiquated controversies; and as the objections and replies, so familiar to theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, die away upon our ears in the distance of history, we find that we have been carried onwards to a point at which the whole colour of controversy has suddenly altered, and the issues have become vastly more momentous. For now a central, inalienable feature of Christianity, which has been always accepted alike by Rome and Lambeth, and by Lambeth and Geneva, as a common premise, as an axiomatic principle, is called in question. A principle which was equally admitted by Bellarmine and by Calvin, however they may have differed as to the range of its application, has come to be regarded by one considerable section of the thought of our day as the distinctive enemy at least of intellectual freedom. So that while I am insisting upon liberty as a Pentecostal blessing, methinks I hear the murmurs of an unexpressed objection rising around me, which it is not difficult to shape into words. 'Others,' the objection might seem to say,—'others may speak of liberty, but not you. Others, who 'are committed to nothing, and who have professed 'nothing; they who inquire, who think, who doubt, who 'deny, may rightly speak of freedom. They indeed may 'be supposed really to enjoy it. But to wear the livery 'of a Church, to accept the championship of a Creed, and 'to rejoice in your portion,—these conditions are incom-

'patible with liberty. They imply adhesion to that which 'in the world of thought is its energetic antagonist; 'they commit you to the principle of dogma.'

Undoubtedly, in the judgment of an influential school of recent growth, dogma is the real enemy of religious freedom. This idea, indeed, bids fair to exert no little influence in our day and generation. It does not merely find expression in books which deal exclusively with theological questions. You may trace it in the literature of science, in the manifestos of politicians, in the many works of fiction which are designed to interest the people. Sometimes this idea seems to be asserted with all the vehemence of an over-mastering passion. Sometimes, too, it enlists in its service the resources of a style of well-nigh unrivalled clearness and beauty. We are told that dogma is "slavish" and "arrogant;" that it is "barren" and "irrational;" that "it overlays the truths of Christianity;" that it is a "hard integument" in which the Churches are "cased." To value dogma is invidiously contrasted with setting a value on Christian character and Christian life; as though, in virtue of some necessary law, the man who cares for the one must perforce neglect the other. Dogma, it would seem, belongs to the Church of the past; the Church of the future will practically dispense with it. The Creeds, those monuments of its ancient sway, may still be retained, upon archæological principles, or as a point of ecclesiastical honour. But in the real life and heart of the Church, dogma will be by degrees "thrown into the background, and may in the end pass practically out of view[h]."

Such is frequently in our day the language of really generous spirits, whom it would be unjust to charge with any conscious intention of assailing a fundamental principle of revealed religion. The idea which is latent in

[h] Prof. G. Smith on the Abolition of Tests, pp. 24, 43, 75, 76, 83.

this objection to dogma is, that it must, from the nature of the case, be untrue. Truth cannot be "arrogant;" it cannot "overlay" truth; it cannot be contrasted with morality, as if morality were its antagonist; it is not likely to pass away, since we know that "it endureth from generation to generation[1]." Dogma is assumed, rather than stated in terms, to be untrue. This assumption is partly traceable to a weakened belief in the reality of an objective revelation committed to the Church of Christ. Those who believe such a revelation to have been given, believe that its substance can be stated in language, and welcome the statement when made by competent authority.

But there are other causes at work among us which help to account for this hostility to dogma. The hands that direct the onslaught are the hands of Esau: but the voice gives utterance to no native type of English thought; it is the voice of the philosophy of Hegel. Certainly the main laws, the most cherished features of the system of that thinker, are rarely presented to, and would not readily be accepted by, English intellect. We English do not readily enter into the statement that the real and the rational are identical, so that the development of the Idea regulates the development of Being; we do not understand the asserted necessity which imposes upon nature and history "the geometrical movement of the Idea scientifically determined;" we fail to see that logic and ontology may be reduced to a single science; we are not often invited to consider the threefold rhythm of the development of pure Being, that is, of nonentity. But we do encounter, we may even have accepted habits of thought, principles of criticism, with no obvious internal connexion between each other, yet distilled, so to speak, from the complete system of the philosopher, and generally

[1] Ps. c. 5.

hostile to the dogmatic side of Christianity. We need not travel far to listen to some contemptuous rejection of the very idea of personality. We are scarcely less than familiar with the paradox that contradictories may be identical. We are more or less acquainted with a criticism of which the central feature is the conception of an indeterminate Being, who under the double form of nature and history, and through a succession of phenomena, becomes determinate. We witness around us, again and again, the entire surrender of all sense whatever of a fixed truth; the diseased mind's eye can see at length nothing but the shadowy, fugitive forms of universal change. There is no recognized rule for reason; in human opinion all is true and yet nothing is true. All truth is partial and limited; all statements of truth are true and false at once. Contradiction is essential to real knowledge; you only complete an assertion when you have stated its contradictory. Truth does not admit of simple positive statement; "its real utterances must perforce flow in a ceaseless rhythm of antitheses." Name this temper of mind as you will; it is in truth the genuine spirit of Hegel. And such a form of intellectual activity is necessarily hostile to the Christian principle of dogma.

This hostility moreover is reinforced from a very opposite quarter. The prevalence of experimental methods of inquiry leads many minds among us tacitly to assume that nothing is real, the truth of which cannot be established and tested by observation. Never before in the history of the world were the lower districts of human knowledge so wonderfully enlarged, as has been the case in our own day, through the astonishing triumphs of the natural sciences. Never before in the history of Christendom has it seemed as if those higher summits of thought, which can only be reached by faith, were shut out from the view of so many noble souls by a cloud of

almost Pagan darkness. And when in the imperishable creeds of Christendom, essential dogmatic truth, like the lightning flash playing around the mountain-peak, discovers for a moment to some enthusiastic experimentalist the existence of a higher world than that in which he so meritoriously pursues his observations, he is sometimes rather irritated than delighted and cheered by the discovery. Because dogmatic Christianity is a positive protest against the theory which sees no value in any save experimental methods of inquiry, the experimentalist will not unfrequently join with the Hegelian in denouncing dogma as the enemy of liberty [k].

Thus it is almost within our own day, that in obedience to these and kindred impulses, a dexterous and active rhetoric has associated this honoured word with the idea of necessary assumption and falsehood. It has contrived to invest a simple name with the power of a hostile and popular argument. Yet after all, brethren, what is dogma? Certainly St. Paul [l] in two cases uses the word more or less disparagingly of those Mosaic ordinances which were falsely insisted on by the Judaizers. And theological definitions, such as was that of the Immaculate Conception, might remind us that we too must still use the word occasionally in an unfavourable sense. But any such use of the word ought to be exceptional [m]; since of itself it suggests nothing untrustworthy or discreditable. Thus the term belongs to the language of civilians; it is applied to the imperial edicts in the

[k] Cf. Caro, Idée de Dieu, pp. 28, sqq.

[l] Eph. ii. 15. Col. ii. 14: comp. v. 20.

[m] Dogma is used of heretical tenets in a bad sense, but with qualifying words which fix this sense. Thus, τῆς ἀσεβείας δόγματα, St. Chrys. t. viii. Serm. v. St. Augustine speaks of heretical dogmas as "pestifera et mortifera." (De Civ. Dei, xviii. 51.) The seventh decree of the third Œcumenical Council describes the "dogmas" of Nestorius as πικρὰ καὶ διεστραμμένα. (Routh, Opusc. vol. ii. p. 9.)

New Testament[n], as elsewhere. It also finds a home in the language of philosophy. It is the counterpart of the *αὐτὸς ἔφα* of her great names. And when Cicero, in reviewing the intellectual movement of centuries, exclaims that "philosophy should now have confidence in herself and in her dogmas[o];" we may reflect that his advice is not even in our own day entirely disregarded, since many philosophers who denounce the dogmatic statements of the Gospel can hardly be described as undogmatic, when they are elaborating their own social, or political, or cosmical theories.

But it is, as applied to the decrees of the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem[p], that the word emerges almost into its full ecclesiastical sense. That which seemed good (*ἔδοξε*) to the Holy Ghost and to Apostolical authority becomes a dogma. Certainly the contents of those earliest Apostolical decrees are practical directions, and not definitions of doctrine; although they all illustrate a great doctrinal principle. However, in St. Ignatius[q], in St. Justin Martyr, in St. Clement, in Origen, in the Apostolical Constitutions, the word dogma is used of the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and of essential Christian truth[r]. And in Socrates the historian, in St. Gregory Nyssen, in St. Cyril of Jerusalem, dogmatic truth is carefully distinguished from the *ἠθικὸν μέρος*, or province of morals[s].

[n] St. Luke ii. 1. Acts xvii. 7.

[o] Cicero, Quæst. Acad. Prior. ii. 9: "Sapientia.... neque de se ipsâ dubitare debet, neque de suis decretis, quæ philosophi vocant *δόγματα*."

[p] Acts xvi. 4: cf. xv. 20. 28.

[q] St. Ign. ad Magnes. c. xiii.: *σπουδάσατε βεβαιωθῆναι ἐν τοῖς δόγμασι τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων.*

[r] Orig. Cont. Cels. iii. 39. Eus. H. E. vii. 30. Compare the other quotations in Kuhn, Einleitung, p. 191, note 1. See also Suicer, Thesaurus, sub voce; Baur. Dogmengeschichte, i. p. 10.

[s] Socr. H. E. ii. 44, p. 132, ed. Oxf. The teaching of Meletius on arriving at Antioch is thus described: *ὁ δὲ πρῶτον μὲν περὶ δόγματος δια-*

Dogma, then, is essential Christian truth thrown by authority into a form which admits of its permanently passing into the understanding and being treasured by the heart of the people[t]. "The greatest of acquirements," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "is the science of dogmas[u]." For dogma is an active protest against those sentimental theories which empty revelation of all positive value. Dogma proclaims that Revelation does mean something, and what[v]. Accordingly dogma is to be found no less truly in the volume of the New Testament than in Fathers and Councils. It is specially embodied in our

λέγεσθαι ὑπερετίθετο, μόνην δὲ τὴν ἠθικὴν διδασκαλίαν τοῖς ἀκροαταῖς προσήκειν. In St. Basil, τὸ τῆς θεολογίας δόγμα is the doctrine of our Lord's divinity; Orat. iv. in Hexaëm. In De Sp. Sanct. c. 27, St. Basil uses "dogma" in the narrower sense of secret traditional and mystical Church usage, and he contrasts it with κήρυγμα, the substance of the Church's public teaching. St. Chrysostom has τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας δόγματα in the sense of the doctrine of the Church. S. Greg. Nyss. Ep. vi. says of our Lord, that διαιρῶν εἰς δύο τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν πολιτείαν, εἴς τε τὸ ἠθικὸν μέρος, καὶ τὴν τῶν δογμάτων ἀκρίβειαν, τὸ μὲν σωτήριον δόγμα ἐν τῇ βαπτίσματος παραδόσει κατησφαλίσατο, τὸν δὲ βίον ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς τηρήσεως τῶν ἐντολῶν αὐτοῦ κατορθοῦσθαι κελεύει. In Gallandi Bibl. Patr. vi. p. 631. Cf. quotations by Suicer, s. v.

[t] "De toutes ces vérités révélées, on n'appelle dogmes, dans le sens rigoureux du mot, que celles.... qui se rapportent à l'essence même de la religion chrétienne, renferment la doctrine ayant pour objet Dieu et Son rapport avec le monde et avec l'homme, et déterminent à quoi et comment le chrétien doit croire pour mériter son salut. Comme vérités de la foi, elles se distinguent de toutes les vérités (ou règles ou principes) d'action; et comme principes de la foi qui sauve, elles se distinguent de toutes celles des vérités de la foi qui sont sans rapport direct avec l'essence de la religion chrétienne, et le salut de l'homme."—*Théologie Dogm. Orth. par Macaire*, tom. i. p. 7, Paris, Cherbuliez.

[u] Μέγιστον τοίνυν κτῆμά ἐστι τὸ τῶν δογμάτων μάθημα. In describing a pious life, he observes that ἐκ δύο τούτων συνέστηκε, δογμάτων εὐσεβῶν καὶ πράξεων ἀγάθων.—*S. Cyrill. Hieros. Cat. Lect.* iv. 2. ed. Reischl. p. 90. St. Chrysostom says that Christianity combines μετὰ τῆς τῶν δογμάτων ὀρθότητος καὶ πολιτείαν ὑγιαίνουσαν. (Hom. 27. in Johan. 3.)

[v] "Es liegt in δόγμα der Begriff des Wesentlichen und Nothwendigen, des Fundamentalen und Principiellen, das als solches schlechthin anzuerkennen ist und absolute Geltung hat."—*Baur. Dogmengesch.* i. p. 9.

Lord's later discourses, in the recorded sermons of His Apostles, in the Epistles of St. Paul. The genuineness of the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians is not disputed by the destructive school of Tubingen. Yet this chapter is in its form and substance quite as dogmatic as are the articles on the Resurrection in the Summa of Aquinas, or in Pearson on the Creed. To grant the existence of false dogma is not to deny the existence of true dogma. And the question whether true dogma exists at all is distinct from the question of its extent. Enough, that He Who came to guide Christ's people into all truth, "to teach them all things[x]," and to "bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever" Christ "had said unto them," gives us in such dogmatic formularies as the Creeds the very mind of Christ. The Divine Spirit, speaking through the clear utterances of Scripture, and the illuminated and consenting thought of Christendom, is the real author of essential dogma; and we know that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty[y]."

But you ask, Is not dogma, as a matter of fact, a

[x] St. John xiv. 26.

[y] Hegel implies that the historical treatment of dogmas is fatal to belief in them. "Das grösste Zeichen aber, dass die Wichtigkeit dieser Dogmen gesunken ist, giebt sich uns darin zu erkennen, dass sie vornehmlich historisch behandelt und in das Verhältniss gestellt werden, dass es die Ueberzeugungen seyen, die *Anderen* angehören, dass es Geschichten sind, die nicht *in unserm Geiste* selbst vorgehen, nicht das Bedürfniss unsers Geistes in Anspruch nehmen. Was das Interesse ist, ist diess, wie es sich bei Anderen verhält, bei Anderen gemacht hat,—diese zufällige Entstehung und Erscheinung; über die Frage, was man selbst für eine Ueberzeugung habe, wundert man sich."—*Vorlesungen über die Phil. der Religion*, Erster Theil, p. 41. Doubtless the habit of looking at doctrinal truth *from without* must issue in infidelity, unless we bear in mind Whose Truth it is which we are considering, and our consequent duties towards it. But of itself the historical study of doctrine need not make us unbelievers. Compare Dr. Döllinger's Vergangenheit und Gegenwart der Kath. Theologie, p. 34 sqq.

restraint upon thought? Unquestionably. But your question implies a notion of liberty which is impossible. Surely a being is free when he moves without difficulty in the sphere which is assigned to him by his natural constitution. If he can only travel beyond his sphere with the certainty of destroying himself, it is not an unreasonable tax upon his liberty, whereby he is confined within the barrier that secures his safety. Now truth is originally the native element of human thought; and Christian dogma prescribes the direction and limits of truth, concerning God and His relations to man. Of course I am not supposing that you dispute the truths which are stated in the Creed; I assume you to have your eye upon that group of converging lines of evidence, which, although separately unequal to prove the truth of Christianity, are collectively so irresistible, that, like the rays of a burning-glass, they light up in the pure soul which seizes their true focus the flame of a life-long conviction. You admit then that revealed truths are true, but you dislike their being stated dogmatically? Why? If they are true, why not state them dogmatically? You reply that in this form they check the independence of thought. Certainly, in a sense, it is true that they do check it. In other words, while you deliberately admit the truth of a position, you are not at liberty to deny it. You cannot wish to do so. You cannot be loyal to known truth, and at the same time ignore or defy her. When you have discovered a fact of experience, you are not at liberty to deny that fact; and you so far forfeit your intellectual independence by your discovery. The dream of an independence of thought, which owes allegiance to no fixed truth of any kind, is at issue, not merely with religion, but with nature herself. An entirely independent force, whether mental or material, a force controlled by no restraints and obeying no laws, exists

nowhere beneath God's throne. Certainly the physical world does not teach us that obedience to law is fatal to freedom. The plants and animals around us are subject to stern and unchanging laws; yet their obedience to these laws is compatible with the utmost variety of growth, form, colour, individuality, habit. The heavens would cease to "declare the glory of God," if the astronomers were to destroy those invariable forces which confine the movement of the swiftest stars to their fixed orbits[z]. And when man himself proceeds to claim that empire which God has given him over the world of nature, he finds his energies bounded and controlled by law, in every direction. We men can indeed transport ourselves, to and fro only on the surface of this earth. Here we live and move freely in an atmosphere, the elements of which are so combined as to preserve our life. But if in an attempt to reach the skies we should succeed in mounting to a region, removed only by an interval of some few miles from the soil on which we tread, and where animal life is impossible, we know that death would be the result of our success. Meanwhile our aëronauts, and even our Alpine climbers, consent to stop short of the impracticable; they do not "complain of the tyranny of the air[a]." Moreover, when we move within the limits which God has assigned to us, the swiftness of our movement is proportioned to our obedience to law. If, for example, we will content ourselves with the modes of travelling known to our forefathers, we may undoubtedly, as we journey hence to the metropolis, diverge from the high road or from the rude pathway without danger, if not exactly without delay or inconvenience. But perhaps we sometimes represent to ourselves the astonishment of Oxford men of the last or of previous centuries, if they could have been told that it would one day be possible to

[z] Bp. Wilberforce. [a] Félix.

reach London from Oxford in little more than an hour. Yet after all, this truly wonderful result has been purchased by what our predecessors might deem a sacrifice of liberty. The engine that carries us forward cannot leave the iron tramway which determines while it facilitates our course, without plunging us, at the very least, into an agony of helpless terror. So it is in the world of thought. Look at those axioms which form the basis of the freest and most exact science known to the human mind. We cannot demonstrate them; we cannot reject them; but the submissive glance by which reason accepts them is no unworthy figure of the action of faith. Faith also submits, it is true; but her submission to dogma is the guarantee at once of her rightful freedom and of her enduring power.

No, brethren, a literally complete independence is denied even to man's thought, since thought too, in its beautiful freedom, is a creature of God. To own allegiance to none is a prerogative of Deity. We cannot conceive God as dispensing with the dependence of any form of created life upon Himself, the Source of Life; since this were to violate the primal law of His Being. And in that highest of all subjects, God's revelation of Himself to created intelligence, the presumptuous self-assertion of the individual thinker, in dealing with His message, can only be deemed a dream of folly. The positive revelations of Scripture and the doctrines of the Church's primitive Creed claim to be God's truth; they are this, or they are falsehoods. That they are what they claim to be is a matter of detailed proof; but I am now contending against the method of discrediting them beforehand by denouncing their dogmatic form. Surely we inflict upon ourselves no grave dishonour by bending before the Thought of God; surely we move with sufficient freedom, if in our freedom we move along the

line of orthodoxy. It is the line which the Eternal Reason has constructed to span the chasms and to pierce the obstructions of thought. It is the line from which we cannot deviate, if we advance at all, without courting that ruin of all convictions which is the penalty of a too presumptuous hardihood.

Certainly, submission to revealed truth does involve a certain limitation of intellectual licence. To believe the dogma that God exists is inconsistent with a liberty to deny His existence. But such liberty is, in the judgment of faith, parallel to that of denying the existence of the sun or of the atmosphere. To complain of the Creed as an interference with liberty, is to imitate the savage who had to walk across London at night, and who remarked that the lamp-posts were an obstruction to traffic. Speaking of the liberty of the press, in his work on American Democracy, De Tocqueville expresses his longing for an intermediate position between an entire absence of restraint and an absolute control of the organs of opinion, as that which would be best fitted to the real interests of the people. We Englishmen, almost alone among the nations of the earth, have the happiness to realize in our political life the aspiration of the historian. We understand the doctrine of the supremacy of the law, and we enjoy the fullest personal freedom. In the Church of Christ there is a similar alliance between freedom and authority. This alliance may be disturbed by sections of Christendom or by single theologians, who endeavour to enforce an intellectual absolutism in matters which are fairly matters of opinion. Or it may be destroyed by a Rationalism which creates spiritual anarchy, only to lay the foundations of a dogmatism differing from that of the Church in its entire lack of any respectable authority. But "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The voice of the Spirit in the soul corresponds to the

voice of the Spirit in Scripture and in the Universal Church; and obedience is felt to be synonymous with freedom. A free people gladly pays obedience to those laws which its conscience has recognized as the best expression of social and political justice. The free intelligence of the Church bows before the language of the Creeds, because that language accurately guards a Truth which the faith of the Church recognizes as of heavenly origin.

They only can suppose that Christian dogma is the antagonist of intellectual freedom, whose misery it is to disbelieve. For dogma stimulates thought, provokes thought, sustains thought at an elevation which, without it, is impossible. It is a scaffolding by which we climb into a higher atmosphere: we must perforce think after some fashion of the Infinite Being, and it teaches us how to think with steadiness and certainty. It leaves us free to hold converse with God, to learn to know Him, though not as yet to see Him as He is. We can speak of Him, aye, and speak to Him, freely and affectionately, within the ample limits of a dogmatic definition. Besides this, dogma sheds, from its home in the heart of revelation, an interest on all surrounding branches of knowledge. God is every where; and to have a fixed belief in Him, is to have a perpetual interest in all that reflects Him. So that religious dogma is the great intellectual stimulant which really urges the friends, and even the foes of that truth which it enshrines, along the various paths of knowledge. Do you whisper that dogma stimulates in its earlier, but petrifies into uselessness in its later, stage of existence? Look, then, at that glorious monument of dogma, at that renowned Confession of Faith, which passes among us, unhistorically no doubt, under the name of the great Athanasius[b]. Hooker[c] warned the

[b] Cf. Waterland's Works, vol. iii. pp. 198–220.

[c] Eccles. Pol., Bk. V. xlii. 13: "Which thing they very well know, and

English Church that the Athanasian Creed had still a work to do, in ages far removed from the Arian epoch; and certainly this Creed has been a standing offence to latitudinarianism from the days of Tillotson to our own. Yet so unprejudiced a witness as the present Bishop of Calcutta[d] has just told us that there are forms of Indian thought which no other instrument so adequately confronts. This very Creed enables him most authoritatively and effectively to advance the missionary work of his Master. Again, what composition can in reality be more dogmatic than the Te Deum? It brings before the soul the truths of the Blessed Trinity and of the Incarnation, with close theological precision. Yet as we use it, it stimulates unbounded spiritual movement. The soul ranges over earth and heaven, plunges into the depths of its own deepest consciousness, mounts to the very Heart of God. The soul moves so freely, because it moves between fixed certainties. It finds that the sublime truths which it adores do not for one moment fetter the freedom of its movement. No Christian who seriously believes the doctrines that Jesus is God, that the Death of Jesus is a world-redeeming Sacrifice, that the Eternal Spirit sanctifies the redeemed, that Scripture is the inspired word of God, that the Sacraments are appointed channels whereby we partake of the Life of Jesus, can say that in himself these truths have petrified, or arrested, or stifled thought. Rather do they open out the widest views of the Divine character, and of the destinies of man, and of the vast

I doubt not will easily confess, who live to their great both toil and grief, where the blasphemies of Arians, Samosatenians, Tritheites, Eutychians, and Macedonians are renewed; renewed by them who, to hatch their heresy, have chosen those churches as fittest nests where Athanasius' Creed is not heard."

[d] The Most Rev. Dr. Cotton, late Metropolitan of India. See his Charge, 1863, pp. 38, 39.

functions and profound interest of the natural world; so that at length the swiftest thought finds its utmost range exceeded, and pauses to cry out with the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out[e]!" or with the Psalmist, "Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him[f]?"

II. And if the kingdom of the Spirit be in truth thus friendly to mental freedom, much more is it the home and refuge of moral liberty. In it, and in it alone, the will is free. Faith in the invisible Christ, in the objective certainties of Scripture and the Creed, are the instruments which the Spirit uses in the work of our moral emancipation. Over the years of past life, during which heaven has been closed to thought, because thought has been unenlightened by faith, we can only sigh with Augustine, "Suspirabam ligatus non ferro alieno, sed meâ ferreâ voluntate[g]." Perhaps it is so still with some of us. We are bound with the bands of habit, of passion, of prejudice. We hug our chains. Perhaps, like the earliest Gnostics, we even dare to promise other men liberty, while knowing ourselves to be really slaves; while feeling, in the misery of our secret souls, that we are ourselves "the servants of corruption[h]."

There is no such thing, believe it, as a resurrection from moral slavery, except for the soul which has laid hold on a fixed objective truth[i]. If, as M. Renan says, God be merely "the category of the ideal," a "résumé of the supra-sensuous needs of man," then He is man's creature

[e] Rom. xi. 33. [f] Ps. viii. 4.
[g] St. Aug. Conf. lib. viii. c. 5. [h] 2 St. Peter ii. 19.
[i] "The salt of Christianity" (says Mr. Merivale) "has been Dogmatic Belief in the Incarnation." Conv. of Roman Empire, p. 136. Compare a striking passage in Mozley's Bampton Lectures, p. 171.

instead of being man's Creator[k]. The idealized god of the school of Hegel is even less able to raise the prostrate will of the creature, the product of whose thought he is, than is a brute animal, or a sculptured idol, since these at least have the merit of an existence independent of the mind of the worshipper. But when, at the breath of the Divine Spirit upon the soul, heaven is opened to the eye of faith, and man looks up from his misery and his weakness to the Everlasting Christ upon His throne; when that glorious series of truths, which begins with the Incarnation, and which ends with the perpetual Intercession and the Sacraments, is really grasped by the soul as certain; then assuredly freedom is possible. It is possible; for the Son has taken flesh, and died, and risen again, and

[k] The passage to which I refer closes an article on Feuerbach and the new Hegelian school. It deserves to be reproduced entire:—

"A ceux qui, se plaçant au point de vue de la substance, me demanderont: Ce Dieu est-il ou n'est-il pas?—Oh! Dieu! répondrai-je, c'est lui qui est, et tout le reste qui paraît être. Supposé même que, pour nous philosophes, un autre mot fût préférable, outre que les mots abstraits n'expriment pas assez clairement la réelle existence, il y aurait un immense inconvénient à nous couper ainsi toutes les sources poétiques du passé, et à nous séparer par notre langage *des simples qui adorent si bien à leur manière. Le mot Dieu étant en possession des respects de l'humanité,* ce mot ayant pour lui une longue prescription et ayant été employé dans les belles poésies, ce serait renverser toutes les habitudes du langage que de l'abandonner. Dites aux simples de vivre d'aspiration à la vérité, à la beauté, à la bonté morale, ces mots n'auront pour eux aucun sens. Dites-leur d'aimer Dieu, de ne pas offenser Dieu, ils vous comprendront à merveille. *Dieu, Providence, immortalité, autant de bons vieux mots, un peu lourds peut-être, que la philosophie interprétera dans des sens de plus en plus raffinés,* mais qu'elle ne remplacera jamais avec avantage. Sous une forme ou sous une autre, Dieu *sera toujours le résumé de nos besoins supra-sensibles, la catégorie de l'idéal* (c'est-à-dire la forme sous laquelle nous concevons l'idéal), comme l'espace et le temps sont les *catégories des corps* (c'est-à-dire les formes sous lesquelles nous concevons les corps). En d'autres termes, l'homme, placé devant les choses belles, bonnes ou vraies, sort de lui-même, et suspendu par un charme céleste, anéantit sa chétive personnalité, s'exalte, s'absorbe. Qu'est-ce que cela, si ce n'est adorer?"—*Études d'Histoire Religieuse,* pp. 418–19.

interceded with the Father, and given us His Spirit and His Sacraments, expressly that we might enjoy it. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed[l]. It is more than possible; it is easy. "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin[m]." "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life[n]."

But then, we are to be enfranchised, on the condition of submission. Submission! you say, is not this slavery? No, believe it, obedience is the school of freedom; in obeying God, you escape all the tyrannies which would fain rob you of your liberty. In obeying God, you are emancipated from the cruel yet petty despotisms which enslave, sooner or later, all rebel wills. In obeying God, you attain not merely freedom, but moral royalty; for if man is royal when he commands nature, and yet more royal when he commands his fellow-men, his highest exercise of empire is over himself, and he best learns to wield it by voluntary submission. He bends in very deed the knee to Christ. He prostrates himself before the mysteries of Bethlehem and Calvary. He listens to the new commandment as to the charter and secret of his freedom; and he rises a king and priest to God and the Father; he has free access to the courts of heaven; he serves One Whose service alone is perfect freedom; nay, "Cui servire regnare est." He reigns over himself; and the play of thought, and feeling, and the movement of passion, and the infinite variety of his activities, do but subserve the invariable unity, the majestic force of his will. As in the material world all expansion is proportioned to the compression which precedes it; so in the moral world, due allowance being made for human self-determination, the formula still holds good, and the will acts with a force which is measured by its power of self-control. Those who imagine manliness to consist in the repudiation of all

[l] St. John viii. 36. [m] 1 St. John i. 7. [n] St. John iii. 16.

authority, do not succeed in making themselves or others really men. They help to justify the sarcasm, that our generation produces old children and boyish men; that it makes us men at sixteen and children at forty. They do more; they undermine the source of moral and spiritual greatness, by sapping its very fundamental law. They create a type of character, inventive it may be, and fastidious in debate, but consistently weak in action. They are really responsible for that lack of individual originality and force, which the author of the Essay on Liberty tells us is characteristic of our time, and which he, not less than writers who believe with all their hearts the Creed of the Church of God, regards as a matter of serious anxiety in the immediate future°. Above all, they teach a doctrine which is inconsistent with the first condition of the highest liberty that is enjoyed either in earth or heaven; since in effect they proscribe the duty, the privilege, of a free submission to Truth.

As loyal citizens of that kingdom of the Spirit which is also the kingdom of the Incarnation, you may be really free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Political liberty is a blessing; liberty of thought is a blessing. But the greatest blessing is liberty of the conscience and the will. It is freedom from a sense of sin, when all is known to have been pardoned through the atoning Blood; freedom from a slavish fear of our Father in Heaven, when conscience is offered to His unerring Eye morning and evening by that penitent love which fixes its eye upon the Crucified; freedom from current prejudice and false human opinion, when the soul gazes by intuitive faith upon the actual truth; freedom from the depressing yoke of weak health or narrow circumstances, since the soul cannot be crushed which rests consciously upon the Everlasting Arms; freedom from that haunting

° Mill, Essay on Liberty, pp. 126–133.

fear of death, which holds those who think really upon death at all "all their lifetime subject to bondage," unless they are His true friends and clients Who by the sharpness of His own Death has led the way and "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." It is freedom in time, but also, and beyond, freedom in eternity. In that blessed world, in the unclouded Presence of the Emancipator, the brand of slavery is inconceivable. In that world there is indeed a perpetual service; yet, since it is the service of love made perfect, it is only and by necessity the service of the free. For "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

SERMON V.

IMMORTALITY.

PSALM lxxiii. 26.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

THIS is one of many passages in the Psalter which show how truly it was the life of eternity, which animated the hopes, and sustained the courage of true servants of God in ancient Israel. If the religious aspirations of the Psalter had been really bounded by the horizon of time, it would have been difficult to understand that instinct of the Church of Jesus Christ, which has guided her from the first ages to place these inspired poems in the hands of her children. Here is a vast world-wide society, constituted on the supposition of its possessing a revelation of an endless life beyond the grave. Instinctively, and in the first age of its existence, this society selects a book which shall be daily upon the lips, and, if it may be, in the hearts, of its members, as the choicest expression of their highest thoughts and strongest hopes. Now this selection of the Psalter, as the devotional manual of the whole Catholic Church, is not to be accounted for by saying, that the Psalter is pre-eminently a prophetical work, in which Christ our Lord is every where to be discovered by the faith of Christians. For, in the case of those Psalms which are not certainly Messianic prophecies,

the reference to our Lord is indirect, or at any rate it is not immediately obvious. However certain of such reference we may be, it does not lie upon the surface of the Psalm. It does not force itself upon the ordinary Christian reader. It cannot be put forward as a thing which will be invariably recognized. We might then expect that in the literal sense of the Psalter, as expressing the aspirations and struggles of the Christian no less than of the Jew, the Church would find the justification of her practice. Especially might we expect that the true dignity and the tremendous destiny of the human soul would be sufficiently recognized in these valued pages to satisfy men who had been illuminated by the revelation of Pentecost.

Such a presumption is warranted by the results of inquiry. Thus in the Psalm before us, Asaph is embarrassed by the difficulties which the prosperity of the ungodly presents at first sight to every earnest student of the laws of the Divine government of the world. The spectacle had almost driven him into scepticism: "My feet had almost swerved," he says, "my treadings had well-nigh slipped."

> "I was envious at the foolish:
> I beheld the prosperity of the ungodly.
> For there are no pangs in their death,
> And their strength is firm.
> They are not in trouble, as frail men,
> Neither are they plagued as human kind.
> Therefore pride is on them as a necklace;
> Violence clothes them as a garment.
> Their eyes stand out with fatness,
> They swell over in thoughts of the heart:
> They scoff and speak oppression wickedly;
> Loftily do they speak.
> They have [as if God] set their mouth in heaven;
> And their tongue travels through the earth[a].
> * * * *
> They say, How doth God know?

[a] vers. 3–9.

> And is there knowledge in the Most High?
> Lo! such are the ungodly;
> In eternal security they pile up wealth [b]."

Thus for a moment it seemed to the Psalmist, who had been "punished" through the long day of life and chastened morning by morning, that "he had cleansed his heart in vain, and washed his hands in innocency[c]." Yet to speak thus, he felt, was to offend against the generation of God's children. It was to abandon their cause to the despair of unbelief. This conviction held him in suspense, until he "went into the sanctuaries of God, and thought on the latter end of the ungodly[d]." In the privacy of sacred retreat from the world, where his soul was face to face with and in communion with God, Asaph turned his feeble querulousness into prayer. As a consequence, his spiritual sight was purged of the film, with which a sensitiveness that at bottom was selfish and sinful had overlaid it. Asaph did not go into the sanctuary, with a view to discovering new facts of experience, that might counterbalance or set aside his previous observations concerning God's providential rule. But he did seek and win a more trustful, more resigned temper, and a more commanding, more religious point of view from which to study his difficulties; while, on the other hand, those very difficulties themselves helped to fortify his faith in an eternal world. For as he learned to believe in a future state with a direct relation to this present life, his doubts respecting God's Providential Rule would be correspondingly lessened. And it could not but be perfectly clear to him that God's government of the world is just, when his faith had once gained sight of the endless life beyond the grave. In the sanctuary, then, Asaph admits

[b] vers. 11, 12. Cf. Dr. Kay's recent translation of the Psalter; from which, however, there are some variations.

[c] ver. 13.

[d] ver. 17.

the moral evil within himself which had enhanced his intellectual distress:—

> "Truly my heart had embittered itself,
> I had pierced myself to my reins.
> Yea, I was foolish and ignorant,
> Even as it were a beast before Thee[e]."

And simultaneously with this self-humiliation came the return of light. Asaph, indeed, owns that he had neglected observable facts which ought to have reduced his difficulty to smaller dimensions[f]. "The ungodly are set in slippery places," only to be cast down and destroyed; their very prosperity is the instrument of their punishment; men may be momentarily dazzled by the shortlived pageant of their vain frail life; but—

> "Like as a dream, when one awaketh,
> So, O Lord, when Thou arisest
> Shalt Thou scorn Their shadowy image[g]."

Yet it is the future only that can give him complete relief from the perplexities of the present; he escapes from time into the thought of eternity. God had thus "laid hold on his right hand;" God had saved him from the abyss of doubt; God would still guide His servant with His counsel, and after that receive him to glory[h]. "Whom," he cries,

> "have I in heaven but Thee?
> And there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee.
> My flesh and my heart faileth;
> But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever[i]."

Now the especial point of these last words, and their bearing on the whole argument of the Psalm, lies in the contrast which they present between the present and the

[e] vers. 21, 22.

[f] Observe the force of אַךְ in ver. 18, "Surely, after all, I was in error; for in slippery places Thou settest them," &c.

[g] ver. 20. [h] vers. 23, 24. [i] vers. 25, 26.

future, between the transitory and the eternal. His bodily frame, or 'flesh,' the Psalmist feels, is breaking up. For the moment it might seem that his 'heart' was partaking in the depressing, sickening sense of coming dissolution. The 'heart' with the Hebrews means, speaking generally, the centre or inner seat of life, whether physical or spiritual. It is indeed used in one well-known passage of the Psalter in the physical sense of animal life-power which is quickened by food and made glad by wine[k]. More commonly it is the centre from which the life-stream of thought and feeling pours through the soul. Thus the 'heart' is said to 'speak,' to 'think,' to 'conceive within self,' to 'meditate,' to 'desire,' to 'cry out in song and jubilee[l],' to be heated with intense thought[m], to be grieved[n], to be desolate[o], to be smitten and withered like grass[p], to be wounded[q], to be broken[r]. Especially is the heart the seat of the moral life, of its movement and repose, of its conquests and failures, of its final victory or death. Thus the heart is said to be 'ready,' or 'clean,' or 'fixed,' or 'whole' and 'perfect,' or 'converted,' or 'hardened,' as the case may be. As the seat of the moral life the heart is described as 'deep[s].' God knows its mysterious secrets[t]. Thus, then, in the passage before us, 'the flesh' is in contrast to the 'heart,' as the animal frame of man might be contrasted with the life of consciousness, feeling, and moral effort. The former is yielding to the slow, certain action of time, and has already upon it the presentiment of death. The latter seems for one instant to lose the sense of its real indestructibility in its profound sympathy with the weakly body which yet encases it. But the

[k] Ps. civ. 15.
[l] Ps. lxxxiv. 2. יְרַנְּנוּ.
[m] Ps. xxxix. 3.
[n] Ps. lxxiii. 21.
[o] Ps. cxliii. 4.
[p] Ps. cii. 4.
[q] Ps. cix. 22.
[r] Ps. cxlvii. 3.
[s] Ps. lxiv. 6.
[t] Ps. xliv. 21.

darkness lasts for a moment only. "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength [or rock] of my heart, and my portion for ever." The contrast is too perfect to be evaded. On one side is the perishing body that will presently be laid in the grave; on the other, the undying soul, triumphantly realizing its full sense of immortality, as it clings in love and thankfulness to the Unchangeable God. To be thus one with the Eternal Being was already to have a certain pledge of endless life. And it is the vision of this endless future—"my portion for ever"—thus presented to the eye of the Psalmist in his retreat within the sanctuary, that completes the removal of his original difficulty with respect to the ways of God. Had this world been all, that difficulty must have proved insuperable. It melts away altogether beneath the rays of light which stream from one cardinal truth; it is solved by the doctrine of the immortality of the soul of man.

I. Life and immortality, we are told, were brought to light by the Gospel. The Gospel has opened "a new and living way" to heaven. It has converted the better guesses and speculations of philosophy into certainties. It has made the Creed of pious Jewish believers as to the world beyond the grave the religion of civilization. But the immortality of the soul was not first taught and believed when our Lord confuted Sadducean unbelief, or when He consoled His faint-hearted disciples on the eve of His Passion. Even remote consequences of the doctrine were perceived long before St. Paul enforced the reality of the Resurrection upon the Church of Corinth, or heaven and hell were opened to St. John in the retreat of Patmos. For Daniel had taught in the plainest language the truth of a general resurrection to endless life or to endless shame[u]. The services for All

[u] Dan. xii. 2. Cf. Dr. Pusey's Daniel the Prophet, p. 492, sqq., for a

Saints' Day will remind us how the Alexandrian author of the Book of Wisdom had described "the souls of the righteous" as being "in the Hands of God, where no torment could touch them," while the wicked with bitter remorse confess the vanity and misery of their past lives [x]. The Maccabean brothers died for the older revelation, with a confession of faith upon their lips which might well have been used by Christian martyrs receiving their sentence at the tribunal of a Roman proconsul [y]. Nor was the idea of immortality only developed in the later history of Israel; although, just as men give thought to religious subjects when they fall into weak health, it is possible that the political misfortunes of the later ages of Jewish history led the national mind to dwell more seriously upon the deeper truths contained in the Mosaic prophetical revelations. Certain it is that even in Ecclesiastes—passages of which have been appealed to even in the interests of materialism—we find an explicit statement of the truth of the soul's individuality, and of rewards and punishments after death [z]; and the book of Job, whatever date be assigned to it, and whether its contents be regarded as history or parable, is throughout a very hymn of immortality. If this world were all, all was lost for Job; God was a terrible enigma; chance was God; Providence was but a name. But Job, in the depth of his anguish, "*knows* that his Redeemer liveth, and that from his flesh he shall behold God [a]." It seems that in

refutation of the rationalistic theory, that this belief came from the Zoroastrians.

[x] Wisd. iii. 1–10; v. 1–13.

[y] 2 Macc. vii. 9, 14, 23. In the words of the youngest of these martyr-brothers, they died "under God's covenant of everlasting life." (ver. 36.) Compare the remarks of Tacitus respecting the later popular Jewish belief as understood by intelligent Pagans: "animas prælio aut suppliciis peremptorum æternas putant." (Hist. v. 5.)

[z] Ecclesiastes xii. 7–14. Cf. Hengstenberg, in loc.

[a] Job xix. 25, 26. "No doubtful meaning of any [single] words," says

Job, as in the Psalter and Isaiah, the doctrine of immortality is in close connexion with that of Sheol—"the house of assembly of all living [b]." So rooted, from a distant antiquity, in the mind of Israel is the belief in Sheol as the home of the departed, that, as a doctrine which had long been popularized, it sometimes furnishes to the Psalmists the imagery which describes national and political dangers. And if Isaiah pictures to his countrymen the meeting between the soul of the king of Babylon and the astonished spirits of the ancient dead [c]; he is not, like Milton, mingling wild imaginings with serious truth; still less is he, like poets nearer our own day, decking up a creed which he regards as extinct with the embellishments of poetry. He is speaking, as of an actual fact, to the living faith of Israel. For the theology of Isaiah and of the Psalter (no less than their language) presupposes, and can only be explained by, that of the Pentateuch. At the present day, for various and some opposite reasons, the well-known paradox of Bishop Warburton, would find but few apologists. The doctrine of Immortality runs through the Bible. It underlies the history of the creation and of the fall of man. It is involved in the statement that man was created originally in the image of God [d]. The penalty which was the consequence of the Fall—"Thou shalt surely die"—implies that the being to whom it was addressed had been before, in body as well as in soul, immortal. Adam's body was not originally formed to be

Dr. Pusey, "can efface from this passage the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh." For a proof of this statement, see his notes, Daniel the Prophet, p. 504.

[b] בֵּית מוֹעֵד לְכָל־חָי Job xxx. 23. Cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 15; Ps. lxxxix. 48. That Sheol does not simply mean the grave has been shown by Oehler, (Vet. Test. Sententia de rebus post mortem futuris, p. 26, sqq.,) quoted by König, Theol. der Psalmen, p. 330. Compare the passages quoted in an article on "Hades" in Herzog's Real-Encyclopädie.

[c] Isa. xiv. 9. sqq.

[d] Cf. Dr. Pusey, Daniel, p. 492.

dissolved; and the promise, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head, would have had no meaning for Adam, unless his soul was to live on in an unseen world, and was thus at length to share in that promised victory. And as the blood of righteous Abel was poured forth upon the soil, it did not merely cry to God for vengeance upon his murderer, it created at once and irresistibly in the conscience even of fallen man, the moral argument for an immortality beyond the tomb. When it is said of Enoch that "God took him," this cannot mean that Enoch ceased to exist, any more than the same expression can have any such force when it is afterwards used with reference to Elijah[e]. The desire for nothing less than a heavenly country is the true keynote to the lives of the patriarchs. Immortality is the charm of the first great promise to Abraham[f]; immortality is the idea which underlies Jacob's description of this life as a pilgrimage[g]. The patriarchs speak and act as men who sit loosely to all that makes their earthly existence dear; and as each in his turn is gathered to his people[h], it might well seem that their faith in immortality is traced upon their rock-hewn sepulchres. The fervent aspiration of Balaam for a death like that of the righteous is but a pointless phrase, if Balaam or Moses believed death to be extinction[i]; and the severe laws which were promulgated by the Hebrew legislator against "charmers, consulters with familiar spirits[j]," and those who, as the witch of

[e] Gen. v. 24: cf. 2 Kings ii. 3, 5. [f] Gen. xv. 1. [g] Ibid. xlvii. 9.

[h] Gen. xxv. 8, 17; xxxv. 29; xlix. 33. Dr. Pusey observes that "this expression does not intend a reunion of bodies in a common burying-place. Abraham was not buried with his fathers, nor was Ishmael. Jacob speaks of being gathered to his people as something distinct from being buried with his fathers. Gen. xlix. 29."—*On Daniel the Prophet*, p. 496.

[i] Num. xxiii. 10.

[j] Deut. xviii. 10, 11. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3, 8, 11, 15. Exod. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 31; and xx. 27.

Endor, professed to call up the dead by incantations, show how profoundly a belief in the soul's immortality had in the early Sinaitic age sunk into the heart of the people, although this belief was blended with an odious superstition. Can we wonder that not merely moral perplexities, but worship, fear, confidence in God, penitence for past sin, the sense of the emptiness of this world, the desire to possess God, draw forth from the lyric soul of the Psalmists, who represent and address the faith of the people, the clear, sweet, exultant note, in which again and again they sing of immortality?

II. The authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, Divine and Infallible, is the true and sufficient basis of this doctrine in the Christian soul. He sanctions the anticipatory statements of the Old Testament, and the dogmatic enunciations of the Apostles whom He sent. His own utterances cover the whole area of what is revealed upon the subject. He thus relieves His servants of responsibility in teaching a doctrine, against which in its fulness the unbelief and the passions of man would often have especial and fierce prepossessions.

The arguments for the soul's immortality are very various in their degrees of abstruseness or popularity. Thus our immortality has been deduced by some thinkers, as by Leibnitz, from an analysis of the nature of the soul[k]. By others it has been argued that the mere idea of an Infinite God and of an endless life implies that the

[k] "Our soul is a substance: now no substance can entirely perish except by a miracle of annihilation. And as the soul has no parts, it is not possible that it should be dissolved into several separate substances; therefore the soul is naturally immortal."—*System of Theology, ed. Russell*, p. 159. In the same way, Leibnitz argues that "the I, or principle of unity, is a thing which cannot perish either in us or in brutes. For to perish always implies dissolution: now the principle of unity, being without composition, is incapable of dissolution."—*Letter to M. de Boineburg*. Compare Butler, Anal. c. i. p. 18.

thinking being who has conceived it must be immortal[l]. The universal desire for a deeper and more lasting happiness than can be found on earth has always appeared to Christian philosophers, eminently to the great Augustine, to point to that future of which the Psalmist sings, "When I wake up after Thy Likeness, I shall be satisfied with it[m]." But the consideration by which the truth before us is most frequently fortified, expanded, propagated in the heart and mind of the people, is that of the Psalm before us. What are the precise natural facts of human life, which first cause the Psalmist such keen distress, and then serve to reinvigorate his faith and hope? The answer is, that man suffers, and is also a moral agent, and that between his moral action and his suffering there is no regular correspondence, nay, rather, there is a perpetual jar and disproportion. From age to age a Tiberius wears the purple, while the pride and flower of human virtue is being crucified between two thieves. In endeavouring to counterbalance the force of this perpetual and universal fact, the formulæ of an abstract logic are powerless; and the secret thoughts, and the accustomed sayings, and the irrepressible emotions of men, mount with the strong certainty of a moral intuition towards an eternal world. Scepticism, indeed, points to the sufferings of the lower creatures; and Bishop Butler would seem to concede the probability of their possessing some modified form of being hereafter, correspondent to their imperfect morality[n]. But be this as it may, what an altogether distinct thing is human suffering from any form of mere animal agony. How intense it is, how enduring, how full of consciousness! Like the flash of lightning which

[l] "Je ne conçois pas qu'une âme, que Dieu a voulu remplir de l'idée de Son Être Infini, et des ses vérités éternelles, puisse être anéantie."—*La Bruyère*, c. 16, qu. by Nicholas, Études, i. 85, ed. Brussels.

[m] Ps. xvii. 14, 15.

[n] Analogy, c. i. p. 17.

reveals to the shipwrecked seaman the watery grave which yawns to receive him, reason illuminates the horrors of human pain. Reason forecasts pain, not by a vague and precarious instinct, but on the strength of an infallible induction. Reason perpetuates pain by committing it to the care of memory. To suffer with reflection upon the fact of suffering, is to suffer each moment with accumulating sharpness of agony. To suffer as men suffer, is to suffer, not as a mere disordered animal organism, but with the moral intensity of a submissive or reluctant will. What is such pain, when unmerited, but the very pledge of an immortality which shall redress its unequal distribution? Many a human life carries along with it, contains within itself, the speaking revelation of an Eternal Future. Search, if you will, among the classes who people history; and you shall find even at the summits of society how "the just man perisheth and no man layeth it to heart," how friends are betrayed, and hearts are broken, and virtue is condemned to the monotony of an apparent failure. But look also more immediately around you; visit those cemeteries of human pain, where it is buried out of our sight; visit our workhouses, our factories, nay, I will add, our prisons. Mark that young girl who is supporting a large family by toiling late and early in a close room, and whose countenance even now betrays the hectic flush of incipient consumption. Visit that dying pauper, who has worked hard and struggled honestly against weak health, and for masters who have treated him much as they have treated the cattle around him. Enter the cell of that prisoner (and such there have been) who is the elect victim of a social panic, and who is sentenced to die for a crime of which he knows himself to be innocent. Explain to these, the suffering classes, that you have disposed of immortality on the authority of this anatomist, or of that metaphysician; and you will encounter

a conviction, of which you suspect neither the strength nor the majesty. That mass of unintelligible suffering will look around it at the many who "come into no misfortune like other folk, neither are plagued like other men[o]," yet without doing or being any thing that could merit exemption; it will look up to that Heaven in which God reigns, hidden indeed by the clouds of His impenetrable Providence, but in Himself, eternally and unchangeably Just; and finally, after a moment of terrible suspense, it will look you in the face to tell you that your disbelief in immortality is inhuman; it will tell you that there must be an eternity, even though it should be too honest and too humble at once to add, with the Psalmist, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

III. It is characteristic of a large section of contemporary thought, more or less unfriendly to revealed religion, that it is at once scrupulously conservative and fiercely radical. Radical, in that its more logical and representative developments destroy nothing less than the very foundations of religious truth and life. Conservative, in that it often clings with tenacious and unaffected earnestness to the consecrated language of the faith. The unbelief of the last century attacked with iconoclastic zeal the terms which enshrined such truth as it rejected, no less than the truth itself. The motto of religious destroyers has generally been, "Destroy the nests, or the birds may return. Leave not the feudal castle standing, or it may again be tenanted by its natural occupants." Our own age is too archæological, too refined, perhaps too self-confident, to act on such a maxim. Catholic cathedrals are decorated, as in Scotland and Switzerland, with painted glass by their Presbyterian tenants; and some very advanced disciples of unbelieving teachers enthusi-

[o] Ps. lxiii. 5.

astically retain the formal language of theology, since, in their hands, we are told, it has become the expression of a higher truth than could attach to it when it was used by the old theologians. Accordingly we hear of grace, together with elaborate arguments against the reality of Divine influences; of prayer, while the possibility of any real action upon the Will of God is formally denied; of the Incarnation, when nothing is less intended than the glorious truth that the Infinite and Everlasting Holy One took our flesh in the womb of Mary; of God, when God has been pronounced to be identical with nature, and when nothing more personal and living is meant than "an abstract order of things, for which it is hard to select any other equally satisfactory designation." Thus the old language is dismantled; it is emptied of its meaning and its life: it is kept up like a venerable ruin, to enshrine a sentiment, but not to give shape and impulse to a living conviction. We are inclined for a moment to resent the semblance of a cruel equivocation. We say that we would rather have to deal with a foe whose hostility to our creed was not masked beneath an appearance of formally confessing it. But this judgment must speedily give way to another more intrinsically accurate, and more welcome to Christian charity and to Christian compassion. Remark, brethren, how in their use of the ancient terminology of the Church, men of decaying faith, or even men whose faith has perished outright, yet pay the tribute of an involuntary homage to the beauty and majesty of her Creed, while in the very act of renouncing its authority. It is a sad satisfaction to them to repeat the language, although they have lost the belief of their forefathers. Conscious of the aching void within them, they cling desperately, imploringly, to words which have been for ages, which are still to millions, which once perchance have been to themselves, the symbols of a living certainty, the framework of

a heavenly truth, that brightens, warms, elevates the soul which really embraces it. Such men are in the position of the shipwrecked seaman, who is battling with the waves, and clinging in his strong agony to a timber of what was once his home, while moment by moment he is really drifting upon the surf or the rocks which will presently mark his grave. Surely we do not tell him, as, powerless to help him, we watch him from the cliffs, that he ought to have kept off a dangerous coast, and that his last hope is a mockery. Rather do we fall on our knees and pray the good God in heaven to defeat our sad anticipations, and to bring help in a case where vain is the help of man. But at least, in the interest of humanity, we describe his misfortune; we investigate, as far as we may, its exact causes; and if need be, we erect a lighthouse, which shall help to save others from his fate. Those who from old affection misuse the language of the faith, may well have claims on our compassion and sympathy; but an explanation is none the less necessary, if we are to claim for Truth her ancient rights, and for human speech its ancient meaning.

Certainly, in contemporary literature the word Immortality is clung to with a desperate tenacity which proves how, in spite of their theories, men shrink from resigning themselves to the naked idea of absolute annihilation.

Here, for instance, is a materialist of the most advanced school, who is nevertheless an ardent believer in immortality. "I believe," says he, "in immortality—the immortality of matter. Matter is really immortal, indestructible. Not any the smallest atom of the sum total of existing matter can ever disappear from existence. Modern chemistry teaches me that the birth and dissolution of the organic and inorganic forms around me do but shift the combinations of matter, while they can neither add to nor lessen the original mass. Matter is thus the

scene of perpetual, uninterrupted change; but its mass and its quality are alike invariable. My body then, although not immortal in its existing form, is immortal in its constitutive elements. My body will turn to dust, and my soul, which is only 'an effect of several molecules endowed with force,' will naturally cease with the cessation of its cause. But the dust itself is immortal, imperishable: it will enter into new combinations; it will subserve to all eternity new forms of life."

Nay, more, he will add, "I believe in a second immortality, the immortality of force. Just as matter in the judgment of my science can neither be created nor annihilated, but only transformed; so it is with force. Force is self-existent, eternal, yet capable of infinite transmutation. Not any the least conceivable quantity of existing force can cease to exist. Weight, mechanical force, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, cohesion, affinity, these forces are inherent in, and inseparable from, matter. They constitute the world; they are, with few exceptions, capable of reciprocal transformations. There 'is a circular movement in force, the correlative to a similar movement in matter.' Thus, therefore, the forces which combine a certain quantity of matter into that actual form which is *myself*, must, I know, in the course of time enter upon new functions and relations which will involve my previous dissolution. But my consolation lies herein;—that these forces themselves are immortal and indestructible; and that, although my personal life is but a fugitive shadow upon the surface of existence, the forces which have resulted in producing it can never die [P]."

"We believe," others urge, "in immortality; and in a higher immortality than that of the elements of our animal life. We believe in the immortality of man, of the human race. We cannot doubt that our species will be

[P] So, for example, Büchner, Kraft und Stoff, ch. 2 and 3.

perpetuated for ever. What if individuals die every where around us? what although we see not merely the old and weak dropping like ripe fruit, almost hourly, into their graves, but strong, hale men cut off by disease or by violence in the prime of life? Does not life, nevertheless, encroach perpetually upon the frontiers of death? Is not the great treasure of human existence ever being handed on from sire to son? Surely the individual may die, but humanity survives; and as the generations which have passed away yet live in the veins and muscles of us their children, so we in turn are assured of a corresponding life, after death, in the generations which will take our place and name."

Say others, "We believe in immortality—the immortality of thought. We grant that little real consolation is to be derived from that power of perpetuating our race and kind which we share with the whole animal and vegetable world. But surely thought, the product of our human reason, is at once proper to man and properly immortal. Our bodies may decay, but our souls will exist in the ideas which they have originated or transmitted. Here is the incentive to generous effort; here is the true, the highest distinction. We will contribute something to the stock of human thought; we will live for ever in the thinking life of humanity. For, literature too has its heaven; and while there are inferior rewards, meted out, in a graduated scale of merit, to lesser celebrities, we may dwell in the rapture of literary aspiration upon the transcendant glories reserved for a Homer, a Plato, a Shakespeare, a Goethe."

"We believe," cries another band of believers, "in immortality; but our 'immortality' must be truly human. It must be moral. The immortals of thought will always be a select aristocracy; whereas we desire an immortality that may be the heritage of the people,—not that

mere immortality of fame which was the ideal of Paganism. Surely conspicuous moral effort, surely an example of courage, of disinterestedness, of toil under discouragements and in the face of difficulties, is a thing which lives. We may ourselves succumb to the law of annihilation; but let us at least enrich the race with a legacy of moral force, or of moral beauty. Let us, whether in the palace or the cottage, whether at the forge or in the library, cultivate moral truth for its own sake, and be sure that no moral truth ever really dies."

"We believe," exclaim some leading representatives of the Pantheistic school, "in immortality; and our immortality, be it observed, is real. We believe that the substance of the soul is immortal. We believe in something higher than dead matter and dead force. A mere prolongation of the species, an immortality of thought or of example, does not content us; because man himself is not the species, nor yet the thought, nor yet the example, and it is an imperfect satisfaction to him that these survive if he himself is annihilated. We do not merely maintain that the soul lives for ever; we assert that it cannot die. Nothing that exists can cease to be; since the idea of nothing involves a philosophical contradiction. There may be a transformation of the soul, but it cannot be literally destroyed. The conditions of its existence may vary, its substance must perforce endure. That which makes up its ephemeral personality may give way to other modes of being, but its actual self can never perish, for the simple reason that it already exists."

Observe, brethren, that this, the Pantheistic representation, has from whatever causes, a peculiar and fatal fascination for a large class of minds in our own day. It escapes the repulsive and inhuman avowals of materialism; the creed of a Lucretius could never be largely popularized. It keeps clear of such unsubstantial "immortalities" as

those of race, or thought, or fame. It might even seem for a moment to be almost radiant with Christian hope. And as it bids us fear not to meet our last hour, in the philosophical conviction that no spiritual essence which already exists can really forfeit existence, we almost hear the great Apostle chanting his hymn of the Resurrection, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory[q]?" But this illusion dissolves on our perceiving that Pantheism, in obedience to its leading principles, while admitting the substance of the soul to be indestructible, yet denies the immortality of the *personal* soul. Let us suppose that the metaphysical base, that the pure substance of the soul could be thus detached, even in speculation, from the conditions of its personal life. Let us imagine that this living, but impersonal substance, this vague idea of a common fund of being, were abstractedly possible. Still, I would ask, is this immortality of Pantheism an immortality, I will not say, in the ecclesiastical and biblical, but in the human sense of the term? Surely this impersonal immortality is only another term for annihilation. Just as God's existence is practically denied by the denial of His Personality, so the immortality of the soul is denied by the philosophy which strips from it all that gives unity, identity, consciousness to our existence, and which asserts, certainly the continuity of something, of some substance or being, vague and indeterminate, of something which may hereafter be pointed to as having been once myself, but which I can as little hope ever to recognize for such as any thing else in nature. At least, it is impossible to feel any practical interest in a destiny so purely metaphysical and abstract. The immortality of the personal soul, with its own history of thought, love, action, struggles, sufferings, with its own enduring consciousness, with its peculiar physiognomy, original and acquired, re-

[q] 1 Cor. xv. 55.

cognized by others without, recognized by itself as before God within, is denied by Pantheism. And when this is generally understood, a few phrases do not check the advance of the common sense of mankind, and we proclaim here a virtual denial of the immortality of the soul.

This, indeed, is practically conceded by a large body of language in this class of writers themselves; since they lay but slight emphasis upon an immortality so devoid of practical interest as that just noted, and address themselves to the culture of a kind of subjective immortality which leaves the question of the future altogether out of sight. The true eternal life, we are told, is not to be looked for beyond the tomb[r]. Immortality is not a form of future existence; it is strictly proper to our present life. If we associate ourselves in thought with the Absolute, with the Divine, we are thereby immortal. Our thought escapes from the sphere of the contingent, and mounts to the Eternal Substance which upholds and sustains it. While thus upheld and sustained, it enjoys a sense of participation in the eternity of the Eternal Being. This sense of participation is not merely a pledge of immortality; it is immortality. In this present life we enjoy immortality; its scene is our thinking and feeling soul. It were childish to seek another immortality elsewhere, and hereafter. "Religious immortality," cries even Schleiermacher, "is to feel, even in this finite world, that we are one with the Infinite and Eternal Being. The man who understands that he is more than his mere self, knows that he loses but little, when he himself ceases to exist. Only he who is conscious of a holier and grander ambition than that of living on as an individual, has a right to immortality. He alone comprehends that illimitable existence, to which we ought without fail to raise ourselves by death[s]."

[r] So Herder.

[s] Second Disc. on Religion, quoted by Caro, Idée de Dieu (Doctrines Récentes), p. 365. Schleiermacher is apparently paraphrasing Spinoza.

The question is, whether, if we do not live on as individuals, *we* can properly be said to live on at all. It is doubtless difficult to reconcile the real permanency of individual existence, with any current doctrine of the identity of the finite and the Infinite. But to distinguish the real soul, as the principle of bodily life, and as destined to perish with the body, from ideal soul, freed from the actual soul by death, and then returning to God, to subsist in Him under the form of thought, is an expedient which does not reassure us[t]. Will then this thought, eternal but impersonal, be my real self? In this theory of an impersonal future existence, there is an inevitable tendency to fall back upon the present sense of immortality, as if it were equivalent to the fact. The question really is this. Is immortality a real thing, independent of our thought about it, or do we in sober earnest create the fact of immortality by realizing the idea? Certainly the growth of the sense of our immortal destiny is an essential feature of the life of God in the soul. This is a truth which no Christian would deny. But no Christian would admit that the independent fact of our immortal existence depends upon our grasping or ignoring the idea of it. We can no more make immortality by thinking about it, than we can create God by thinking of Him. The sense of immortality is one thing; the fact another. Fichte somewhere speaks of his "realizing the life to come in the present life, because he lives conformably to moral order." If this means that a good man has in his conscience a sweet and certain foretaste of heaven upon earth, every Christian will agree with him. If we are informed that it means, "that the thought of eternity is essentially immortality," we cannot but become aware that in point of fact the future world is not really believed in at all. There is nothing really to be looked for beyond this world of sense and time, with the 'idea' of eternity, such as it is, in re-

[t] So Schelling.

serve, as something to fall back upon, if we like to do so. The 'idea' may still yield us an intellectual pastime; it can hardly be cherished as a serious consolation. It is one thing to believe in immortality; it is another to assert that man "possesses the power of conceiving the Eternal."

IV. The only immortality which can aspire permanently to interest and influence mankind must assert that the life of the soul in perpetuity is an *objective* fact, altogether independent of our mental conceptions, nay even of our moral activities. And the Gospel does *not* say to us, "Create an immortality for yourselves by 'living conformably to moral order,' or by 'thinking on the Eternal and the Absolute.'" It says rather, "You are already, whether you know it or not, whether you will it or not, immortal beings. You cannot now be other than immortal, for the simple reason that God has gifted you with an indestructible principle of life. Strip, then, from the eye of your spirits that earthly film which hides from you the real dignity, the mysterious awfulness, the vast capacities of this gift of life. Look to it, that the eternity which is inevitably before you be an eternity, not of the woe which you may merit, but of the bliss which has been won for you by the Sanctity and Sufferings of your Lord."

A real immortality is an objective fact: it is also the immortality of a *personal* life. The ancient Pantheists delighted in the illustration of the drop of life which returns at death to its parent ocean, and which is undistinguishably blended with the boundless expanse, the unfathomed depths of Universal Being. But, suppose it possible to say that an existence is really continued, from which all that constitutes individuality has been withdrawn. Suppose it possible to hold to and to rejoice in this presumed identity of the mere substance of being with what

once had been a living individual man. Still the question must arise, How can you hope to trace it? Why insist upon this identity, if it is too vague or too subtle a thing to be verified? Consider. How shall we recognize ourselves hereafter? How shall we know that we have existed previously on the earth? How shall we, each one of us, perceive and be assured of the intellectual and moral continuity of our lives? How shall we be convinced that our place in another sphere is in any sense a result of a previous existence?

(*a.*) It is obvious here to refer to Bishop Butler's Dissertation on Personal Identity. Such personal identity will have to be tested first of all by the action of memory. The doctrine of metempsychosis, which seeks a relief from the moral perplexities of life in a new sphere of probation for the sinful soul after death, forfeits this test of personality when it makes the disembodied spirit drink of the waters of forgetfulness. Memory may be suspended in sleep and distorted in idiots, but destroy it utterly and you destroy all power of appreciating personality. Even in this world memory recalls circumstances, friends, states of mind, forms of thought, so different from those of which we have present experience, as to belong apparently to a different life from our own. Yet memory bridges over the chasm between the present and the past; and we realize our living personality as we trace the oneness of our personal history. In Butler's words, "By reflecting upon that which is myself now, and that which was myself twenty years ago, I discern that they are not two, but one and the same self." Of course this consciousness "ascertains," it "does not constitute personal identity[u]." But life, which else were a series of disconnected fragments, is thus exhibited to us by memory as an organic whole: and as we plunge into

[u] Bishop Butler, Dissert. on Personal Identity. Works, vol. i. p. 308.

the past, and reconstruct the picture of our acts and sufferings in bygone years, we gain a clear, sharp insight into the fact of our personality, which has created that history from which we are now so far removed. So, only in an infinitely greater degree, will it be hereafter. Memory, which is often thrown into the background of the inner life by the more active importunity of reason, imagination, and will, reserves herself for those crises when a great fear or a great sorrow bids thought, and action, and even fancy be still, that the past may return like a flood upon that soul which has lived for years only in the present. Memory waits awhile to flash forth at the appointed hour her ever-latent revelations, often, as experience shows us, in the immediate anticipation of death, certainly, as the Faith assures us, at the judgment-seat of Christ. Surely she will not then review the past once for all, that she may dismiss it for ever; she will live to be the everlasting heart-ache of the lost, the everlasting joy of the redeemed. To believe in the immortality of the soul is to believe, I do not say in the continuous activity, but in the continuous (although sometimes dormant) power of memory. Do you ask whether amid the sublimities of the future world it will be possible that we should dwell on the commonplace, insignificant life of this? Ask yourselves in turn, whether any human life, which has before it, and must issue in, an eternity, be really insignificant and commonplace? Has real greatness any thing whatever to do with outward circumstances? Will not the poorest cottage, the humblest, most monotonous drudgery of occupation, be everlastingly bright in a saintly memory, if that cottage have been the scene, that occupation the discipline, amid which a predestined soul has been training for the life of heaven[x]?

[x] Who does not feel this, in reading that beautiful contribution to Christian literature—the Journal of Eugénie de Guérin? Some of

(β.) Memory surely will recall ourselves to ourselves for ever. But in doing so, it will recall others. Dives must remember not merely his "good things," but "his five brethren." Others have acted upon us, and we upon them; and this reciprocated influence enters most intimately and every where into that history of life which reveals its personality to the soul. We cannot but remember them: but—shall we merely remember them? Will our view of that past, so profoundly interesting to ourselves, be a dry, passionless register of our relations to those whom we knew on earth? Impossible. The dead whom we have loved on earth live at this hour, not merely in our memories, but in our hearts. We do not merely remember that we once loved them; we love them now. It is not memory which keeps love alive. Love it is rather, which cannot die, and which involves the persistent life of memory. We should not know ourselves, our earthly life would be to us strange and unintelligible, if we could remember without emotion those whom we have once really loved. And therefore we should only retain a mutilated soul; our soul would have forfeited its identity, if it could have stripped itself of affection in the act of dying, while it retained the cold, clear consciousness of objects which had once reigned in the heart. Doubtless this brings us face to face with an anxious question, which has often been asked, about the continuance of such earthly attachments, as will be seen hereafter to be incompatible with a perfect vision of the Sanctity of God. And it must be admitted, that all who have been loved on earth cannot be everlastingly loved in heaven. But, even in this life, the heart makes its necessary sacrifices to the just demands of faith or of reason. Nor does this admission really impair the substantial fact of the eternity

the thoughts in this Sermon—I cannot say which—are, I doubt not, hers.

of legitimate affection as an integral feature of the soul's personal immortality.

(γ.) Besides memory and affection, that which we term character is a test of personality. As no two faces, so no two souls, are absolutely alike. The Creator exhibits His inexhaustible resources in moulding an unnumbered series of individuals after a general type, without making any one of them the exact counterpart of another. The differences between soul and soul are greater than any bodily differences of feature and stature. They are, it may be added, independent of the vital and trenchant distinctions which sever souls in a state of grace and reconciliation with God from the sinful, and the unreconciled. Differences in the soul's physiognomy, differences original and profound, sever race from race, sex from sex, this individual from that. Here reason predominates, feeling there; here action, there passion; in this quarter is decision, in that tenderness; on this side a daring impetuosity, on that a cautious or timid reserve. We find in others the complement of what is lacking, or the corrective of what is excessive in ourselves. But meanwhile these peculiar capacities, dispositions, shades of feeling, turns of thought, which have no moral colouring, are, in their combination, part of our individual inheritance of the gift of life, and enter profoundly into our personality. Can we surrender them altogether, and be still ourselves? Will there be nothing to distinguish St. John from St. Peter in heaven? Certainly "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female[r]," in that each sex is equally an object of His Divine Redemption; and those who live with Him in His eternal Kingdom, will, as we know, be conformed to the Image of the Son of God. But will there be no line of demarcation hereafter between things so unlike on earth as the devotion of a saintly man and

[r] Gal. iii. 28.

the devotion of a saintly woman? Are we to suppose that original differences of spiritual structure, so intrinsically interesting, so illustrative of the Divine Infinitude, so essential to the maintenance of our perfect individuality, will be annihilated in that world of beauty and glory, will be sunk in the sameness of an absolute monotony, before the very throne of the Great Creator?

(δ.) A spiritualist thinker who rejected revelation, yet who believed seriously in the immortality of the soul, must hold such immortality to be personal, and must, upon analysis, admit the persistence of memory, affection, and character, as tests of continued personal life. But he would part company with the Church of Christ when she professes her belief, not merely in the life everlasting, but in the resurrection of the body. Yet may it not be true that our Christian belief in the resurrection of the body is but the logical consequence, the last and highest expression of the Christian's intense belief in, and reverence for, the indestructible personality of man? Would that personality be entirely unmutilated, if at death the body were to perish outright[z]? Has not the body been for

[z] Compare the language of South's Sermon on the General Resurrection (vol i. p. 360, ed. Bohn, 1855): "And therefore the opinion of the Socinians, namely, that the soul, at the resurrection, shall be clothed with another and quite different body, from what it had in this life (whether of ether or some such like sublimated matter), moved thereto by the forementioned objections, and the like, ought not to be admitted: it being contrary to reason and all sound philosophy, that the soul successively united to two entirely distinct bodies, should make but one and the same numerical person: since, though the soul be indeed the prime and chief principle of the individuation of the person, yet it is not the sole and adequate principle thereof; but the soul, joined with the body, makes the adequate individuating principle of the person. Nor will any true philosophy allow, that the body was ever intended for the mere garment of the soul, but for an essential, constituent part of the man, as really as the soul itself: and the difference of an essential half in any composition will be sure to make an essential difference in the whole compound. Nor is this Socinian assertion more contrary to the principles of philosophy than to the express words of Scripture, which are

years the companion, the home, the organ, the expression of the soul within? And does this companionship point to nothing but a higher freedom and perfection for the soul, when soul and body shall have been parted by death? Even the theory of a metempsychosis restores a body to each disembodied spirit, but then it is a body altogether different from that to which the soul was previously united. The Christian faith bids us look forward to a resurrection of that very body which has been throughout our earthly life the instrument, the dwelling-house, perchance the faithful transcript of the personal soul within it. And the risen body, transfigured, translucent with spiritual glory, will still assert in the courts of heaven the deathless endurance of our personality in its unimpaired completeness [a].

Certainly the doctrine of an impersonal immortality receives no support from the moral argument which appeals to the unequal, unintelligible distribution of human suffering. Let us suppose that death destroys personality. It destroys in us, then, that which thinks and wills, which knows that it thinks and wills, which consciously apprehends actual existence, and which links that existence by memory to a long and intricate past, during which it is equally conscious of its own unimpaired identity. But if personality be thus destroyed by death, what remains in us which can be compensated, punished, or rewarded? The agent or the sufferer has been merged

not more positive in affirming a resurrection than in declaring a resurrection of the same numerical person. And whereas they say, that they grant that the same numerical person shall rise again, though not the same body, (the soul, as they contend, still individuating any body which it shall be clothed with), we have already shown, on the contrary, that the person cannot be numerically the same, when the body is not so too; since the soul is not the sole principle of personal individuation, though the chief."

[a] Cf. Caro, Idée de Dieu (Doctrines Récentes), p. 440. I have largely followed this writer in parts of the preceding analysis.

by the hypothesis in an ocean of universal life; and, consequently, it fares as well with the ungodly, "whose eyes swell with fatness, and who do even what they lust," as with the Psalmist, "punished all the long day of life, and chastened every morning[b]." If we are to adopt these formulæ of Alexandrian or Indian speculation which have in the present century met with so marked a welcome in the heart of what was Christian Europe; then there is certainly no after-woe for Dives; no rest in Abraham's bosom for Lazarus; no real, tangible paradise for the penitent who dies with his eye upon the Crucified; no "going to his own place" for Judas; no crown of righteousness, except in his own bright imagination, for the aged Apostle. The threatenings of Revelation mean nothing worse than its promises; its promises point to nothing better than its threats. All who live are assured equally of an eternal life, which practically will be to all an equal and utter annihilation.

V. "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." This in all ages is the exulting voice of the conviction, of the instinct, of the sense of immortality, in the servants of God. He upholds them in being, and His eternity is to be the measure of their own endless life. Yet they do not lose themselves in Him. He upholds their distinct personality; "God is the strength of *my* heart:" He so folds them to His Bosom, that *they* possess *Him*; "God is *my* portion for ever." Already, in a measure, heaven is within them, by anticipation. Yet their sense of an undying existence does not create, still less is it a substitute for, the reality.

The sense of immortality may be lost; the fact, whether for weal or woe, remains. The sense of immortality may be gradually or violently killed out of the soul, by the errors

[b] Ps. lxiii 7, 14.

of depraved intellect; or it may be buried alive, beneath the filth of animal indulgence. That soul must have parted company with its God which is indeed altogether enslaved to matter. It is the willing accomplice of a body whose degradations sap the springs even of physical life. It hastily shuts its eyes with sensitive apprehension against the unwelcome shadow, against the dreaded presentiment, of an actual immortality. Truly such a soul is in love with death. It is sinking lower and lower, deeper and deeper, into the moral and intellectual abyss. And as it sinks it forfeits, without a pang, the perception of its own powers, of its own reality, of the unity, and simplicity, and immateriality of its essence, of its past spiritual freedom from matter, of its possessing, of its being an indestructible principle of life. It welcomes any philosophy which will engage to overcloud the Face of the Sun of Righteousness, or which will assist it to bury itself decently in the folds of sense, and to forget its true home and destiny while it feeds upon the husks that the swine did eat.

Can such a soul return? can it rise? Undoubtedly. On this side of the grave there are no limits to the power of the grace of God. And as the soul rises, it recovers its hold upon those glorious truths which it lost in its descent. Together with the sight of God, the sight of the true self returns. The sense of immortality is deepened by all that brings the personal soul, consciously, face to face with the personal God Who made it. The sense of immortality is deepened by penitence; for penitence is the sincere exercise of memory upon our past existence, under the guidance of the love of God. It is deepened by prayer; for prayer is the voice of the inmost being consciously speaking to its Maker. It is reinforced by such channels of the Divine Power as are the sacraments: the earliest Fathers spoke of the Eucharist, in allusion to the words of our Divine

Lord, as "the salve of immortality[c]." It is stimulated by acts of self-sacrifice, which kindle into intense consciousness the immortal germ of life; though they may for awhile depress, at the bidding of eternal principles, its earthly tenement. It prompts, and is strengthened by, a genuine love of man as man. Doing justice to the greatness of human destiny, it has no heart to dwell upon the accidents of birth, or station, or income, or accomplishments which overlie the mighty reality, upon which alone its gaze is persistently fixed. But it attains its greatest strength, it prepares for its loftiest triumphs, at the foot of the Cross of Jesus; since the Agony of the Divine Victim reveals the price and yields the measure of the life of the human soul.

Thus they who, like David, have gazed on the dying Redeemer by the light of prophecy, or who, like St. Paul, in the full sunshine of the Gospel, have determined "to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified[d]"—have enjoyed in the highest degree the sense of immortality. What the representatives of an advanced civilization are among a herd of savages, such are the saints of God when we compare them with ordinary men. They have higher aims, larger horizons, more commanding points of view, a loftier, nay a totally distinct conception of life and destiny. It is said that the Roman conquerors of the

[c] "The true understanding of this fruition and union which is betwixt the Body and the Head, betwixt the true believers and Christ, the ancient Catholic Fathers both perceiving themselves, and commending to their people, were not afraid to call this Supper, some of them, 'the salve of immortality and sovereign preservative against death;' other, 'a deifical communion;' other, 'the sweet dainties of our Saviour,' 'the pledge of eternal health, the defence of faith, the hope of the Resurrection;' other, 'the food of immortality,' 'the healthful grace,' and 'the conservatory to everlasting life.'"—*First part of the Sermon concerning the Sacrament, Homilies*, p. 398, ed. Oxf. 1844. Cf. φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, S. Ign. ad. Ephes. c. 20.

[d] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

world carried in their faces the secret of the triumphs of an imperial people. Much more do sincere Christians walk the earth with the mien and bearing of a race of immortals; although the rays of spiritual majesty which stream forth from the burning spirit within them, often do but illumine the weakness of the body which yet encases it. Of such it is literally true, that "whether they live they live unto the Lord, or whether they die they die unto the Lord[e]." They know that the few years of time are but a halt at the gate of Eternity; and that true wisdom consists in practically understanding the ineffaceable distinction, which parts that which perishes before our very eyes from that which must last for ever.

[e] Rom. xiv. 8.

SERMON VI.

HUMILITY AND ACTION.

PROV. iii. 6.

In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

A CHARACTERISTIC of the Old Testament Scriptures, which results from the genius of the Hebrew language, is specially observable in the Book of Proverbs. Instead of the copious, versatile, precise, and in so many respects unrivalled instrument which the Greek wields when expressing his thought, the Hebrew writer has at command a language possessing by comparison only a few and simple words. But, among these, many are words of the widest range and applicability. They are words containing depth below depth of meaning. They are words which include and anticipate all that a more elaborate language attempts by such resources as composition. Such words only escape from being vague and indefinite, because they are, and were felt by those who used them to be, the expression of thought which is as earnestly positive as it is plainly comprehensive. Of these pregnant words, the immediate context is generally the sufficient interpreter. It often summons forth, from among the treasures of thought which underlie the word, that one variety or shade of meaning which is thus shown to be most prominent in the inspired writer's mind. But

it also not unfrequently leaves us embarrassed by the abundance of meanings which suggest themselves, and which are doubtless intended to teach us the depth and many-sidedness of the sacred language through which we attain so large an insight into the Will of God. Hence it results that the Old Testament Revelation, particularly in matters of morals, covers much more nearly the same area as the New, than we may have been in the habit of supposing. The precepts of the New Testament are often in point of fact specific applications of some more general precepts which are found in the ancient Scriptures. These applications were always and literally latent in the thought of the Old Testament writer; but they are only brought out into distinct relief and detail by the language of some Apostle or Evangelist.

Now the text furnishes us with a sample of this almost untranslateable pregnancy and power of Hebrew speech. The English word 'acknowledge' represents only one of the many meanings which are to be found in the original word יָדַע. This word, originally identical with εἰδεῖν and *videre*, came to signify that which results from sight, unless the sense be imperfect or the understanding impaired, namely, knowledge. It exhibits knowledge at all its stages of growth. It stands for a knowledge of isolated facts, and for a knowledge of facts in their largest combinations. It describes a mere act of perception, an unsuspected discovery, a stern experience inflicted upon the dull understanding; it pictures casual acquaintance and the closest possible intimacy; it is used of knowledge by name and of knowledge face to face. It is used of the moral sense recognizing moral good or moral evil; and of the affections gaining knowledge of their object through being exercised on it. It depicts the movements, not merely of the heart and intellect, but also of the will. It thus represents sometimes the watch-

ful, active care of God's loving Providence, sometimes the prostrate adoration of a soul, in which knowledge of its Divine Object has passed into the highest stage, and is practically inseparable from worship[a]. As used in the passage before us, it describes nothing less comprehensive than the whole action of man's spiritual being when face to face with the Eternal God. To "know" God in truth, is "to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him, with all the heart, with all the mind, with all the soul, and with all the strength; to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put our whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His holy Name and His Word, and to serve Him truly[b]." When, then, we endeavour to extract from this broad idea of "knowledge" some one practical and specific application, our minds first of all wander over that vast field of moral and mental action which is possible to a created spirit, consciously and religiously moving in the presence of its Creator.

Now in the first division of the Book of Proverbs, which embraces the first nine chapters, there is a marked sequence and continuity in the thought of the sacred writer. And this coherence of the subject-matter notably contrasts with the loosely connected or totally disconnected maxims of later portions of the Book. We are

[a] In justification of these statements, cf. Gesenius, Thesaurus, s. v. יָדַע for examples. It need scarcely be added that in the case of words which, like the present, express movements of the spiritual life of the soul, neither the grouping of meanings nor the translations of passages which are frequently suggested by that accomplished scholar would always appear satisfactory to a believing Christian. The highest philological attainments sometimes fail to discover the intimate sense of Scripture, which nevertheless is at once obvious to a spiritual instinct. The Christian finds the living interpretation of Scripture language in his own experience. And the consenting and illuminated thought of Christendom, as represented in the language of the early Church, is the safeguard against any presumptuous over-reliance on private experiences.

[b] Church Catechism.

therefore justified by the general character of that portion of the Book, to which our text belongs, in seeking for a limitation of the idea of "knowledge" in the verses which immediately precede and follow it.

> "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;
> And lean not unto thine own understanding.
> In all thy ways 'acknowledge' Him,
> And He shall direct thy paths.
> Be not wise in thine own eyes:
> Fear the Lord, and depart from evil."

Here plainly a contrast is suggested between a man's "leaning to his own understanding" and "being wise in his own eyes" on the one hand, and a specific form or result of real "knowledge" of God on the other. It is irresistibly implied, that to know God truly, to have a full sight of God before the soul, is something more than mere head-knowledge, that it is knowledge in act. It is, in short, to be out of heart with self, to distrust self, to abase and crush and forget self; we are sensible of the Presence of a Being Who discovers to self its insignificance, or its pollution. The text thus includes, besides much else, such specific exhortations as that of St. Peter[c], "Be clothed with humility." It may therefore serve to guide our thoughts on an occasion when, as you are aware, the preacher is bound by the custom of the University[d] to invite his hearers to cultivate the eminent and characteristically Christian grace—thus explicity prescribed by the great Apostle, thus implicitly but really suggested by the royal Hebrew moralist.

I. Not long since the question was discussed, whether

[c] 1 St. Peter v. 5, 6. It is plain from the context that humility here means (1) specifically, submission to God's providential appointments in the hierarchical distinction of ministers in the Church; (2) more generally, absolute submission to God, as being the creature's duty towards his Creator. Cf. especially ver. 6.

[d] Preached on the morning of Quinquagesima Sunday.

a virtue can ever die. A brilliant but paradoxical writer decided, "not only that virtues may die, but that the death of some virtues and the birth of others are among the most startling and instructive conclusions to which the philosophy of history leads us." He observes, by way of illustration, that the virtues peculiar to a Roman provincial governor present a picture to which mediæval Europe can offer no parallel; and again, that such mediæval virtues as poverty, chastity, and obedience "have ceased to be the typical virtues of modern life." Without inquiring how far these mediæval virtues were based on direct precepts or counsels in the New Testament, or again how far the mediæval form which such virtues may have temporarily assumed is to be distinguished from their essential and imperishable spirit; the writer pronounces them all to be dying or dead. With respect to the last of the catalogue, 'obedience,' he fervently exclaims: "Submitting intellect to authority seems to us merely childish: it is no longer intellect if it does not work its own way. If ever a virtue was dead, this of obeying intellectually is past and buried [e]."

Looking to the writer's general position, we must distinguish between historical fact and moral obligation. Certainly particular relative excellences do characterize particular races, epochs, stages of social progress. They appear; they shine forth; they cast lustre on an age or a generation; they wane and fall back into obscurity; they vanish outright. Moreover, the outward mien and dress, the living aspect, the practical applications even of imperishable virtues, may and do vary with the varying conditions and phases of human society. These are simple facts which lie upon the surface of the history of humankind; but the historical fact may not for one moment be confused with the moral judgment which a Christian

[e] *Saturday Review*, Nov. 14, 1863.

must pass on it. Doubtless there are forms of virtuous action suited to human life at one stage of its development which do not fully express or answer to its wants and aspirations at another. But the question does not concern the mere modification of the outward expression of a virtue; we are discussing the actual disappearance of the virtue itself from the life of a generation. When such disappearance takes place, are we to condemn the generation or to condemn the virtue? Was the virtue an excellence, or was it a superstition? Is the generation which has lost it really to be congratulated on having achieved a step towards moral freedom; or is it to be mourned over as being the victim of a moral misery? On this issue a well-informed Christian and the writer before us would take opposite sides. The writer contends that, "if we act in a particular way, we ought not to be willing to admit that we are wrong;" meaning apparently that when modern society has discarded a virtue, it is justified in assuming itself to possess a kind of practical infallibility, which condemns the virtue and justifies itself. But a Christian has before him a higher and more reliable standard of goodness than is supplied by the accidental and shifting opinion of contemporary society. He has in his hands a revelation of moral truth, correspondent indeed to the purest intuitions of his moral sense, but itself infallible. He knows that every true virtue is based on truth; and that a truth of morals, when pursued by analysis to its abstract form, is just as indestructible a thing as a truth of mathematics. Once a virtue, always a virtue: that which is absolutely right now was always right, whether it was recognized for such or not: that which was ever really right is right at this hour; whatever may be the transient attitude of our opinion or our practice towards it. If practical applications may vary, imperishable principles must live. Purity, justice, the

love of God, the love of humankind, unselfishness;—these, and such as these, live for ever. The Roman provincial governor may have attained to a type of natural excellence, the precise physiognomy of which was determined by the exceptional and stimulating circumstances of his position. But whatever was good or true in Pagan ethics lives on in the Divine morality of the Church, and is incorporated with the foundations of a moral code which unassisted nature can no more realize in practice, than she could, even in the best days of the later Stoicism, have even sketched in theory.

Be well assured, brethren, that a virtue cannot really die. It may indeed be neglected, forgotten, depreciated, denounced; but it cannot be absolutely extinguished by the verdict whether of a school of thought, or of a country, or of an age, or of an entire civilization. If indeed it be a virtue at all; if it ever deserved the name; if it was ever more than a strictly relative form of excellence; then assuredly it is an imperishable force. The pledges of its immortality are to be found on earth and in heaven; as high as the Eternal Mind of God, as deep as the inmost conscience of regenerate humanity. Society may determine that the hour of that virtue is come; society may believe it to be, may speak of it as being, dead and buried. Literature may make its sepulchre sure, "sealing the stone and setting a watch." But no true virtue was ever buffeted, condemned, crucified by the injustice of opinion, without the certainty of a coming resurrection. No such tragedy as the social extinction of a virtue was ever perpetrated by an infatuated people, without an accompanying Divine assurance, granted to loyal and faithful hearts, that the conscience of man should one day gaze in self-accusing love and adoration on that very form of moral beauty which man's malice or his ignorance had dared to pierce.

The opinion which views intellectual submission as a

dead virtue, could hardly ascribe any strong vitality to the grace of humility; since submission of the intellect under justifiable circumstances, such as the presence of an adequate authority, is related to the generic virtue humility, as one of its specific varieties, or as the necessary result of its controlling principle. Still there is an interval between the denial of a specific form of a virtue and a repudiation of the virtue itself; and, to do justice to our age, we have not yet reached a point at which humility is described in terms as an old-world and effete virtue. Indeed, our age lays particular stress upon modesty, which may be described as the social aspect of humility detached from its internal principle; and which is related in point of value to the original virtue for which it is often substituted, much as a plaster-imitation of an antique statue is to the statue itself.

Yet there are tendencies abroad which seem to be converging towards the proscription of humility by modern opinion. Our conquests in the world of matter and in the world of thought are held to justify an attitude of mind widely different from that of the generations who have passed away. It was theirs, we think, to cultivate virtues which might beseem the babyhood of civilization; it is ours to practise the modes of thinking and acting which are natural to its manhood. If they in their ignorance did well to be self-distrustful, we in our knowledge and our power do better to be self-reliant and self-asserting. This is the thought and tendency rather than as yet the avowed language of a school which is exercising a very powerful influence in the formation of character and opinion. It is often said that Oxford men of the present day are more self-reliant than their predecessors of fifteen or twenty years ago; and, if this be so, it only amounts to saying that you, my younger brethren, have suffered from the action of intellectual

causes which doubtless are at work in all classes of English society. You may meet with those who will congratulate you on the fact, if unhappily it be a fact; but no man could do so who was speaking to you from this pulpit in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. You will pardon, nay you will welcome, a frankness which is not so much the right as the necessity of a sincere ministry of the Truth, and which is due not less to yourselves than to Him Whom here we represent; but it is possible that some of you may be disposed to ask why it should be implied that humility is a virtue thus absolute and indispensable. I must answer by asking you to reflect on the only possible condition of its ceasing to be so. If God could be pronounced non-existent or dead; if Positivism or Pantheism were new revelations, at whose bidding that Living Being Whom we Christians worship should vanish as if He were but the Great Pan of an expiring heathendom; if there were no governing Providence on earth, no Throne raised high above all other thrones in heaven; then there would be no room, no justification for humility. Man, however he might have come into existence, might then seriously suppose himself to represent the highest existing life; and the man who possessed a keener intellect or a stronger arm than his fellow-men might naturally demean himself as if he were God.

Certainly, in the absence of belief in the living God, there would be no occasion for the culture of humility. But, whatever other questions are being agitated around us, at least we are not yet inquiring whether God exists or not. Nay, our Christian lips still profess to ascribe "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." We have not yet ignored the First and Highest of all facts. We still confess the

existence of One Being, Who is utterly and awfully unlike all others. We are "sure that the Lord He is God;" that "it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves;" that "we are His people and the sheep of His pasture[f]." We, the work of His Hands, live consciously beneath the Eye of our Creator. He alone is Almighty, alone Eternal, alone and literally Incomprehensible. Creation as it lies, in all its marvellous beauty spread out before Him, with its countless worlds, its innumerable orders and forms of life, its vast, unimagined, unexplored materials, and forces, and laws, is to Him as a toy, which in the fulness of His Almighty freedom He fashioned but yesterday. It exists, as it was framed, simply by His Will. He alone is Self-dependent; He alone needs nothing from other beings; He is the One Being Whom nothing can impoverish, Whom nothing can enrich, Whose greatness and blessedness are altogether beyond the reach whether of loss or increase[g]. He, our God, and He alone, is essentially holy. In the highest and most saintly of His creatures He beholds the taint of moral imperfection, of "folly;" and they, in turn, offer Him the tribute of a perpetual adoration which proclaims that He is altogether, in His essence, beyond and unlike themselves[h].

Depend upon it, brethren, the knowledge which a Christian inherits in the Church of such a Fact as God cannot be only head-knowledge. It tells at once, for for good or for evil, on the moral nature. It provokes rebellion, when it does not suggest reverence, awe, love, humility. For simple, truthful, earnest men, to see God

[f] Ps. c. 2. [g] Dr. Pusey.

[h] Exod. xxiv. 17. Deut. iv. 24; ix, 3. Heb. xii. 29. Rev. v. 8; viii. 3, 4. St. James v. 15. Burning incense is the symbol of the sin-covering power of prayer—like the cloud that filled the temple. Keil on 1 Kings viii. 10, 11.

truly with the soul's eye is to lie in the very dust before Him. So it was with holy Job; so it was with the entranced prophet Isaiah; so it was with St. Peter and St. John "when they beheld the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth[i]." "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes[k]." "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, ... and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts[l]." "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord[m]." "When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead[n]." Such in all ages is the language of the saints; the language of those to whom God is not a phrase or an hypothesis, but a Living Fact, in the light of Which man learns to recognize his real self.

If, then, humility *is* dying out, this is because the idea of God has been impoverished or impaired in the thought of our day. If we do see Him as He has revealed Himself, we must surely bend in unrestrained prostration before Him. To see God is not barely to gaze at Him. It is to yield Him that absolute submission which is due from a creature who owes every thing to Him, and whose life is moment by moment in His Hand. It is to pay a relative submission, whether of thought, or feeling, or will, or outward action, to all on earth on which He has set the stamp of His moral greatness, or to which He has delegated aught of His truth or of His authority. Humility is but the sincere acknowledgment in thought, in language, in

[i] St. John i. 14.

[k] Job xlii. 5, 6.

[l] Isa. vi. 5. Compare even the language of Gideon (Judg. vi. 22), and of Manoah (Judg. xiii. 22), after seeing what was probably only a created angel, who reflected the Divine glory. See Dr. Mill's note on the 'Captain of the Lord's Host,' Clr. Adv. Publication for 1841, pp. 92, sqq. (Mythical-Interpretation, edited by Webb, p. 354).

[m] St. Luke v. 8.

[n] Rev. i. 17.

action, of the First and most commanding of all facts: it is the sincere acknowledgment of God. And as long as the Gospel-revelation unveils God in His awfulness and in His beauty to the soul of man, so long Jesus Christ will be followed to Heaven by generations of the humble.

II. All this, my brethren, you will admit: no one who sincerely believes in God can well do otherwise. Yet, it may be, in the background of your thought there lurks an unconfessed suspicion which impairs the heartiness of your admission. Theoretically speaking, humility must of course be right. But look, you would say, to its practical effect. Does it not interfere more or less with activity and success in life? Is it not secretly hostile to the claims and efforts of vigorous and cultivated intellect? Can we be sure that to "acknowledge" God in the sense which has been pointed out, does really lead to a "direction" in "the paths of life," that will be compatible with our social usefulness and our mental improvement?

Of these questions, it must be granted, that the first has often been answered in a manner which would increase your apprehensions; and the Gospel, the only religion which has ever popularized humility, has been specially reproached with a tendency to withdraw its votaries from the interests and duties which belong to us as members of civil society. Self-distrust, self-abasement, the devotion of time and thought to a solitary, unseen labour within the precincts of the soul, the yearning, the struggle for inward peace, the calm delight of sustained communion with God, issuing always and only in a deeper self-prostration before Him;—all this is represented as a selfish and enervating substitute for the struggles, the duties, the burdens, the anxieties, the aspirations of public and political life. 'What is Christian humility after all,' it has been said, 'but an attempt to make sloth, and cowardice, and pusillanimity look respectable? If humility be not a

vice or a weakness draped in the garb of a virtue, what is it, after all, but a virtue so merely personal, so anti-social, as to be scarcely distinguishable from a vice?'

It was probably in part due to some such prejudice or suspicion which floated along the current Pagan opinion in his day, that even Tacitus, with his earnest hatred of tyranny, and his sympathy for oppressed innocence, has not one word of protest against the oppressions and cruelties which were inflicted on the Church by the earlier Cæsars. And in the eighth book of Origen's great work against Celsus, it may be gathered, as well from the attack of that Platonic rather than Epicurean[o] thinker, as from the counter-statements of Origen, that Christianity was then regarded by Roman society as unpatriotic, because it was not an active political influence at the service of the State. Origen partly admits the justice of the imputation when he observes that Christians could not then take part in many public offices, without sanctioning by some phrase or ceremonial the popular Paganism which coloured so pervadingly the public as well as the private life of ancient Rome[p]. But he argues that the Church rendered the highest services to the Empire by her educational and moral activity; and he shows how her own hierarchical institutions fostered, in the interest of a nobler cause, those very qualities which are developed by political life[q]. Tertullian indeed, apparently having an eye to the progress of the Church in

[o] Origen calls him an Epicurean. But see Bishop Cotton's art. 'Celsus' in Smith's Dict. Ant.

[p] The Senate always met in a temple, or some other sacred edifice. "The innumerable deities and rites of polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of public and private life."—Note in Gibbon, vol. ii. p. 48, ed. Bohn.

[q] Origen, Cont. Cels. viii. 73, 74, 75. Dean Milman, when describing the agitations which preceded the elevation of Damasus to the Roman Chair, speaks of the "Roman populace" as "quickened by a new principle of freedom" after its long subjection to the despotism of the Empire. Lat. Christ. i. p. 67.

Western Africa, takes bolder ground in a well-known passage of his Apology. "We Christians," he exclaims, "are but of yesterday, and yet we are every where among you; in your cities, your islands, your castles, your townships, your committees, in your very camps; we are found in all divisions and classes of the population, in the palace, in the senate, in the forum: we leave you to yourselves only in your temples[r]." And it would appear from the first book of Saint Augustine's work on the City of God, that when Rome was sacked by the hordes of Alaric, the misfortune was traced by the Pagan society of the time to a neglect of the worship of the gods, rather than to any anti-political feature in the Christian character. But the eighteenth century witnessed a reassertion of the objection which is answered in the Apologists of the second and third. An entire school of infidel writers set themselves to contrast Christianity disparagingly with the ancient Paganism. The political inferiority of Christian civilization, the political incapacity of a true Christian, is a sort of indirect moral which Gibbon suggests perpetually in his celebrated work[s]; while in Voltaire's "Essay on the Manners of Nations," this judgment is developed, and defended with more warmth and distinctness. Unhappily, it would not be accurate to add, that the language of these celebrated sceptics has never found an echo in our own day.

Now, of all the features of the Christian character, humility has very mainly to bear the brunt of this attack. Yet it seems that, however unintentionally, the true idea of humility is lost sight of by those who would thus represent it as hostile to the claims of civil and public interests. For after all, what is humility? Humility is not a *μικροψυχία*. On the contrary, the true Christian is

[r] Apol. 37. Comp. c. 42.
[s] Cf. especially Decline and Fall, 15, § 4, s. fin.

the genuine μεγαλόψυχος; he is pre-eminently the man of large soul and noble instincts. Humility is not a want of enterprise, a subtle resource of idleness. The man in the parable with one talent was not a humble man: the Apostle was humble, who yet cried, "I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me[t]." Humility is not a lack of courage; it is not the poverty of spirit which shrinks from encounter. It is not an abandonment of inalienable responsibilities: to God alone we must make account for what we believe and do. Still less is it a false, artificial posture of the soul, a kind of dramatic attitude; or, as men have imagined, an ecclesiastical grimace, the putting on language, and looks, and a demeanour that might belong to something which is not really felt. Beyond every thing else, humility is the victory of truth in the soul and character; it is truth, daring, determining to recognize the insignificance and pollution of a man's real self beneath the purity and majesty of God. But, being such as this, humility is not an isolated excellence; it does not jostle against or undermine other forms of goodness, which equally with itself are integral portions of moral perfection. It is part of a great moral whole. Instead of proscribing, it promotes the growth of virtues, unlike, yet not unfriendly to itself. A humble man, for example, may well have a burning zeal for the welfare of his fellow-man, or an uncompromising hatred of moral evil, or the courage which is strong to work, to struggle, or to suffer. It is very certain, that the force which is apparently forfeited by the destruction of self-reliance in the character, is more than recovered when the soul rests in perfect trustfulness on the Strong Arm of God. Moses, who is described as "very meek[u]," and who shrank back in evident agony from that leadership of

[t] 1 Cor. xv. 10. [u] Numb. xii. 3.

Israel to which he was called by Providence, yet sternly vindicated his mission against the rebellious Korah[x], as he had previously inflicted a sharp vengeance upon the idolaters whom he found worshipping the calf on his descent from Sinai[y]. St. Ambrose did all that in him lay to decline the perilous dignity of the see of Milan, which was forced on him by the suffrages of a whole clergy and people;—then as now, for tender consciences, the lining of the mitre was but the crown of thorns. But when, at the gate of the Portian Basilica in Milan, Theodosius dared to ask for the communion of the Church, while his hands were yet red with the slaughter of Thessalonica; this humblest of Bishops knew what was due to that God of peace and justice Whom he represented, and the master of the Roman world stood rebuked before the lowly servant of Jesus Christ[z]. Humility, so far from destroying moral force, protects and strengthens it: it sternly represses the petty vanities through which the strength of the soul evaporates and is lost; it keeps even a St. John the Baptist "in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel;" and then, when the hour is come, it opens upon the world the force of a soul which is strong precisely because it has been humble. It is then inaccurate to say that the Gospel, which undoubtedly discourages selfish ambition and petty vanity, is therefore chargeable with the moral fault of unfitting men for the public duties of life, or for the service of their country.

[x] Numb. xvi. 28-30. [y] Exod. xxxii. 25-28.

[z] For a vivid account of the scene and of the circumstances which led to it, see Mr. Bright's "History of the Church from the Edict of Milan," p. 206. Even the scornful Gibbon admits that "posterity has applauded the virtuous firmness of the archbishop; and that the example of Theodosius (in submitting) may prove the beneficial influence of those principles which could force a monarch, exalted above the apprehension of human punishment, to respect the laws and ministers of an invisible Judge."—*Decline and Fall*, vol. iii. p. 256, ed. Bohn.

Nor here in Oxford is it necessary to name the honoured name of one—a statesman and philanthropist of the last generation—at whose bidding England made a vast material sacrifice that she might be rid of the curse of slavery, and who notoriously carried into all the public and private relations of life, the sincerity, the charity, above all, the humility of a true Christian. And in our own day there are living evidences of the truth that the service of Christ by true and noble souls is no bar to the service of the State. We need not look beyond our own University in order to be assured, that the most comprehensive schemes for the moral and material welfare of the people, and for the inauguration or the development of a great policy, may go hand in hand with the culture of a sensitive conscience, and with the filial yet free submission of a lofty intellect to the dogmatic teaching of the Church.

'But surely,' you urge, 'humility is the enemy of intellectual enterprise. Humility may very well become the indifference which has no heart for inquiry, or the conscious weakness which shrinks from attempting it. But if intellect is to win its way, it must trust itself; it may acquiesce in the speculations of others, but at least it must bend before no master; it must hold itself, as did the Sophist, to be the measure of all things; its ambition, like that of the Epicurean poet, must be

> —— "munita tenere,
> Edita doctrinâ sapientum, templa serena,
> Despicere unde queas alios passimque videre
> Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ[a]."

Not otherwise can our civilization pursue its opening career of victory; since the "humility" which was a temper well suited to the ages of ignorance is a drawback and a curse in a day like our own, when man need only

[a] Lucret. ii. 8–11.

trust himself to be speedily master of the world and of his destiny.'

No, brethren—"in *all* thy ways," in the sphere of intellect no less than in that of public active life, acknowledge God, and be humble. Such humility as we learn upon our knees is the best foundation of all solid knowledge. The acknowledgment of God,—the Highest Truth, the First of facts,—leads us to love and to seek fact and truth every where, and to reap the intellectual reward of doing so. Who is the really good scholar but the man who, when young, has been thoroughly grounded in his grammar? Those years of drudgery, those years of careful humble acknowledgment of philological facts, end in the creation of an instinct, almost of a new sense of scholarship,—an instinct so fine, so true, that it can afford to dispense with grammar and dictionary. But the triumph is precisely proportioned to the degree of humility which has submitted itself implicitly to the discipline of facts; and there is no short road to such high and rare accomplishment. What was the method of the Baconian philosophy but a moral as well as an intellectual triumph when for the wide assumptions which had kept physical science for centuries in its cradle, it humbly substituted the basis of individual and specific experience? The late Mr. Buckle unintentionally eulogizes physical inquirers in England, when he complains that they spend their energies in an unceasing round of observation and experiment [b], and that they do not allow sufficient play to the imagination in the construction of hypothesis. Certainly, if physical science, especially when dealing with those delicate and interesting problems which lie on the frontier that separates her own empire from the peculiar territory of Divine revelation, should be tempted to become unhappily imaginative, and should commit her-

[b] Hist. of Civilization, vol. ii. p. 502 *sqq.*

self to a series of imposing hypotheses, ornamented with rather than sustained by incidental facts: it would be, speaking intellectually as well as religiously, a sad day for the future of England. A well-ascertained fact must, indeed, command the reverence of every man who worships the God of truth: he may be unable to harmonize it with other facts; but he does not therefore endeavour to explain it away, as though it did him a wrong and he bore a grudge against it. A Christian of course has knowledge of another order of facts, distinct from and beyond those which he can see, and feel, and smell; but he does not sacrifice facts of sensible experience to facts of revelation, any more than he sacrifices facts of revelation to facts of experience. And when it seems to him that there is a contradiction between the two, he waits patiently; conscious as he is that he is himself below truth and not above it, and that he is in no position to conclude that the seeming contradiction is certainly real. But to reverence the majesty of fact, is one thing; to render to mere tentative and ambitious hypothesis that honour which is due only to fact, is quite another. Theology can but welcome the facts of Science: she may reasonably be jealous of the occasional encroachments of scientific hypothesis. And by this jealousy she does good service to the real interests of science itself; since the temper which indulges in the luxury of frequent and premature hypothesis, is the very opposite of that industrious, because humble, perseverance which perpetually enriches science with a larger and larger command of fact.

Humility, then, is the ally of intellect instead of its enemy, because humility is both a moral instinct which seeks truth, and a moral instrument for reaching truth. Humility leads us to base our knowledge on truth; it also leads us truthfully to recognize the real measure

of our capacity. Why has Aristotle, with his comparatively materialistic mind, been on the whole so much higher an authority in the schools of Christendom than the more spiritual Plato? Because Aristotle more humbly and truthfully confines himself to the discussion of questions which can really be discussed without the aid of a supernatural revelation. Why is the intellectual progress of Christian countries so superior to that of any known Pagan civilization? Because the Incarnate Christ has popularized, even to a certain degree among those who reject Him, a virtue which is essential to the highest intellectual development. Why did such princes of intellect as Pascal and Leibnitz bend in such true faith and worship before the Feet of the Crucified? Because that very virtue which had taught them to base their knowledge on truth, had also taught them the limits of created intellect, and had pointed to a sphere in which the highest reason employs its energies in bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ. Submission of the intellect is only folly if God has never spoken, and if on the highest subjects that can interest mankind, we possess nothing more trustworthy than a human speculation. But those who teach that intellect should never yield submission, do not, at least uniformly, profess to reject the fact of a Revelation. This is not the occasion for insisting on the evidence which proves that such a fact exists. I am merely observing that no evidence, however strong, would suffice to recommend religion where it is discredited beforehand by a theory which proscribed the truthful instinct of humility. Gibbon speaks[c] of the "incurable suspicion"

[c] See Gibbon's account of the Catholic confessors of Tipasa, in Africa, who continued to speak after their tongues had been cut out by the Arian Count Hunneric. Gibbon enlarges, with evident enjoyment, on the completeness, as he himself considers it, of the contemporary testimony, both Christian and

which protects the mind of "an infidel" against undisputed but unwelcome facts; but this suspicion can

Pagan, to this miracle. . . . "This miracle," he says, "is attested by Victor, an African bishop, who published a history of the persecution within two years after the event. 'If any one,' says Victor, 'should doubt of the truth, let him repair to Constantinople, and listen to the clear and perfect language of Restitutus, the subdeacon, one of those glorious sufferers, who is now lodged in the palace of the Emperor Zeno, and is respected by the devout Empress.' At Constantinople we are astonished to find a cool, learned, and unexceptional witness, without interest and without passion. Æneas of Gaza, a Platonic philosopher, has accurately described his own observations on these African sufferers. 'I saw them myself: I heard them speak: I diligently inquired by what means such an articulate voice could be formed without any organ of speech: I used my eyes to examine the report of my ears: I opened their mouth, and saw that the whole tongue had been completely torn away by the roots; an operation which the physicians generally suppose to be mortal.' The testimony of Æneas of Gaza might be confirmed by the superfluous evidence of the Emperor Justinian, in a perpetual edict; of Count Marcellinus, in his Chronicle of the times; and of Pope Gregory the First, who had resided at Constantinople as the minister of the Roman pontiff. They all lived within the compass of a century; and they all appeal to their personal knowledge or the public notoriety for the truth of a miracle which was repeated in several instances, displayed on the greatest theatre of the world, and submitted during a series of years to the calm examination of the senses." Gibbon then proceeds: "This supernatural gift of the African confessors, who spoke without tongues, will command the assent of those, and of those only, who already believe that their language was pure and orthodox. But *the stubborn mind of an infidel is guarded by secret incurable suspicion.*"—*Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. c. 37, pp. 148-9. ed. Bohn.

In the *Lancet* of January 27, 1866, Professor Syme, of Edinburgh, relates how, "twelve months ago the tongue of a patient had been completely removed by excision. On the 10th of September, 1865," continues Prof. Syme, "the patient unexpectedly made his appearance, and seeing that I did not recognize him, he announced his name in a loud clear voice. My surprise was not lessened on learning that while travelling in the Highlands, he had dined at *tables-d'hôte*, and had entered into conversation, without betraying the deficiency under which he laboured . . . I requested a number of my medical friends to join me in examining the state of matters. Professor Goodsir, Mr. Nasmyth, and Mr. Annandale having satisfied themselves that no vestige of the tongue remained, various observations were made with regard to articulation, and other functions of the absent organ. . . . In ordinary speech his words are wonderfully clear and distinct, and

hardly aid the infidel's real intellectual growth. And it is no paradox to say that a believing Christian, recognizing the facts which invite or compel belief in Revelation, so far from forfeiting mental strength by doing so, is intellectually stronger than a sceptic, who determines to ignore their reality or at least their significance. The Christian's humility is in reality the cause of his mental energy.

III. But, beyond controversy, humility is indispensable to the true life of the soul. There are graces which may be given or withheld; there are experiences, assurances, raptures, ecstasies. These are the accomplishments, rather than the needs of the Christian. But no man ever went to heaven without learning humility on this side of the grave.

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven [d]." Without humility, that is, without the victory of truth in the conscience, no soul ever really turned to God. It is as

he can sing without any difficulty. . . . It has been long known that large portions of the tongue may be removed without destroying or materially impairing the power of articulation, but I am not aware of any case on record in which it has remained so perfect after complete removal of the organ." The eminent physician to whom I am indebted for the above reference, adds that many such cases are on record, with some of which Gibbon might have been expected to have made himself acquainted. The case of Margaret Cutting, for example, is fully detailed in the Philosophical Transactions for 1742 and 1747. The ancient physicians "do not appear to have been aware of the fact that a person may speak after his tongue has been cut out;" and it is therefore not surprising that the case of the African Confessors was regarded by antiquity as certainly miraculous. Whether that particular case was or was not miraculous may indeed still be doubtful; but, however it be explained, there can be now no doubt about the fact itself. And supposing the fact to admit of a natural explanation, Gibbon's way of regarding it is not a less pertinent illustration of my argument. On that supposition, the "infidel's secret incurable suspicion" "guards" him, not against a conclusion of faith, but against a fact certain to physical science.

[d] St. Matt. xviii. 3.

hard for us now-a-days, as for the barbarians on the Rhine of old, to learn, at the bidding of our Heavenly Lord, "to reverence what we have burned, and to burn what we have adored." When, then, God by His grace converts a soul, He reveals Himself to it sufficiently to make it humble. Without humility, a contrite heart, and a prevailing prayer for pardon, are impossible. Without humility, though we be scarlet with sin, we only "go about to establish our own righteousness, not submitting ourselves to the righteousness of God[e]." We try to forget our real selves, by dwelling on the good but mistaken opinion which others may have formed of us. All is hollow beneath the surface of the character, but we hug the delusion that all is sound. We shrink from that sight of God, and of ourselves, from that simple acknowledgment of fact, which, when we face it, must leave us in our shame, trembling indeed before the Infinite Purity, yet not without a hope and a remedy at the bar of Infinite Mercy. It is only when the proud heart is broken, that a man casts himself at the Feet of our Crucified Saviour, to pray that the Atoning Stream of Blood may wash out his deep stains of guilt, and give him peace in giving him pardon.

Without humility, religious progress is impossible. Pride is the destruction of the principle of progress; it whispers to us continually that we are already all that could be desired; or it points our attention to high positions and ambitious efforts, beyond the scope of other men. Now the true growth of the soul is not to be measured by our attempting many or extraordinary duties, but by our power of doing simple duties well; and humility, when it reigns in the soul, carries this principle into practice. It bids us who work with our brains in

[e] Rom. x. 3.

this place, to hallow our work, especially whatever may be to us hard or distaseful work, by doing it as a matter of principle. It reproves us when we are neglecting our plain duty, the plain duty of reading for our degree, on grounds such as that of our being anxious to begin without further delay to read for Holy Orders. It guides our religious thoughts to a deeper mastery of the Central Truths of Faith rather than to the study of those intricate problems which lie on the outskirts of theology. It counsels us, when on our knees, to use simple prayers. We do well to retain the very prayers which we used as children, however we may add to them; and to throw our whole soul into each separate clause and word. It enriches common acts of neighbourly and social kindness with that intensity of moral effort, which is due to every act, the deepest moving power of which is the Love of God.

Once more, without humility no soul that has turned to God, and is learning to serve Him, is for a moment safe. The whole life of the living soul is the work of Divine grace; and while pride claims merit for self, and therefore goes before a fall, humility confesses day by day, "By the grace of God I am what I am." The higher you climb the mountain-side, the more fatal must be your fall, if you *do* fall. If you would look over the giddy precipice without risk, you must first stoop to lay firm hold on the rock of humility. Brethren, it is not imagination, it is not rhetoric, it is a terrible fact,—again and again inflicted upon our understanding by the actual experience of life,—that there are no depths of moral degradation to which a man may not sink, who neglects this, the most necessary, if not the chief, of virtues. The mark of the beast is traced in every generation on the features of Babylon the proud. For humility is the condition and guarantee of grace; and, as St. Augustine says, there is no reason,

apart from the grace of God, why the highest saint should not be the worst of criminals.

When we honestly consider the conditions of this life, so feeble, so frail, so short; when we feel the pressure of that sense of sin, which, like pain in the body, is the proof and safeguard of surviving or reviving life in the soul; it might seem easy to be always and perfectly humble. But he who knows his own heart, knows that as pride was the first sin which sullied the moral world, so it is commonly the last which is violently expelled from the soul of a regenerate Christian. There are virtues of the natural order, such as justice, temperance, courage, prudence, which we may be led to cultivate by simply ascertaining what is socially or materially best for ourselves. It was indeed thus that these virtues were cultivated of old by our Pagan forefathers. But if we would be really humble, we must be students in the School and worshippers in the Church of Jesus Christ; since humility is a grace which, in its higher forms, He Alone creates in the human soul. Here then may be our most appropriate work for the coming season of Lent. He Who is very God of very God, "took upon Him our flesh, and suffered death upon the Cross,"—for other reasons, indeed, but also,—"that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility[f]." He bids us come and learn of Him, since He is meek and lowly of heart. The Human Nature which He wears in Heaven at this very hour, throned as He is at the right hand of the Everlasting Father, is of Itself a pledge to faith, that the grace of humility never can die. The Gospels, wherein it is told us how He once "emptied Himself[g]" of His glory, have an inexhaustible power, a bloom and freshness that defies criticism and decay. The Sacraments which He left on earth to be the organs and channels of His quickening Manhood, are still as they

[f] Coll. for S. next before Easter.

[g] Phil. ii. 7. ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε.

have ever been since He lived and died in Palestine, channels of spiritual force and life. We may, indeed, be humble, if we will. And Jesus, Who speaks to us in His Word, and Who strengthens and refreshes us at His Altars, assures us, that if we will indeed acknowledge Him as our Master and our Saviour, He will direct our paths through the struggles of active life, or through the wearinesses and triumphs of solitary study, up to that gate of Heaven where He waits to welcome us. But the only passport that can warrant the boldness of faith, when, in the supreme moment of her victory and her bliss, she will claim an entrance through His prevailing merits, will be none other than this grace of a sincere humility.

SERMON VII.

THE CONFLICT OF FAITH WITH UNDUE EXALTATION OF INTELLECT.

2 Cor. x. 5.

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

HERE is an Apostle of the Lord Jesus who uses the language of a soldier. He is planning a campaign; nay, rather he is making war: he glows with the fire of a genuine military enthusiasm. The original Greek which he uses has in it a vigour and point which is lost, to a great extent, in our English translation. The writer might almost be a Roman general, charged to sustain the honour of the Empire in a revolted province or beyond a remote frontier, and bent upon illustrating the haughty maxim which defined the duty of an imperial people,—

"To spare the vanquished, but to crush the proud."

Indeed, it has been urged that the recent history of Cilicia itself may have well suggested this language to St. Paul. The Apostle's native country had been the scene of some very fierce struggles in the wars against Mithridates and the pirates; and we are told that the latter war was only ended, not sixty years before the Apostle's birth, by the reduction of one hundred and twenty strongholds and

the capture of more than ten thousand prisoners[a]. The dismantled ruins may have easily and naturally impressed the boyish imagination of Saul of Tarsus with a vivid sense of the destructive energy of the military power of Rome; but the Apostle of the nations only remembers these earlier impressions to give them a spiritual application. The weapons of his warfare are not carnal; the standard under which he fights is a more sacred sign than that of the Cæsar; the operations which he projects are to be carried out in a territory more difficult of conquest than any which kept the conquerors of the world at bay. He is invading the region of human thought; and as he fights for God, he is sternly resolved upon conquest. He sees rising before him the lofty fortresses of hostile errors; they must be reduced and razed[b]. Every mountain fastness[c] to which the enemy of Light and Love can retreat must be scaled and destroyed; and all the thought of the human soul[d] which is hostile to the authority of the Divine truth, must be "led away as a prisoner of war[e]" into the camp of Christ. Truly a vast and unaccountable ambition; a dream—if it were not, as it was, a necessity; a tyranny—if any thing less vigorous and trenchant had been consistent with the claims of the Truth of God, or equal to the needs of the soul of man.

The particular opposition to the work of Christ which the Apostle encountered at Corinth was indeed less intellectual in its form than the Galatian Judaism, or than the theosophic angel-worship which was popular at Colosse, or than the more sharply-defined heresies of a later time

[a] Stanley in loc., who quotes Appian, Bell. Mith., 234—238.

[b] καθαιροῦντες, the military term for reducing a fortress. See Wetstein in loc.; Elsner, Obs. p. 152, quoted by Meyer.

[c] ὕψωμα is apparently the Hebrew מִבְצָר. Stanley in loc.

[d] πᾶν νόημα. Cf. Meyer in loc.

[e] αἰχμαλωτίζοντες.

which, as we know from the Pastoral Epistles, threatened or infected the Churches of Ephesus and Crete. St. Paul's Corinthian opponents resisted, depreciated, disowned, beyond every thing else, the Apostle's own personal authority. This, however, was the natural course of things at a time when single Apostles well-nigh impersonated the whole doctrinal action of the Church; and feeling this, St. Paul speaks not as one who was re-asserting a personal claim of any sort, but merely and strictly as a soldier, as an organ, I might say, as a function, of the truth. The Truth had an indefeasible right to reign in the intellect of man. The Apostle asserts that right, when he speaks of bringing the whole intelligence of man into the obedience of Christ. Now, as then, Christ's Church is militant here on earth, not less in the sphere of thought than in the sphere of outward and visible action; and St. Paul's burning words rise above the temporary circumstances which called them forth, and furnish a motto and an encouragement to us who, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, fight in the ranks of the same army and against the same kind of foes as he did.

Remark, first of all, that it is "the undue exaltation of" intellect, with which the Church of Christ is in energetic and perpetual conflict. With intellect itself, with really moral and reasonable intellect, with the thought of man recognizing at once its power and its weakness, its vast range and its necessary limits, religion has, can have, no quarrel. It were a libel on the All-wise Creator to suppose that between intellect and spirit, between thought and faith, there could be any original relations other than those of perfect harmony. Paradise could have been the scene of no such unseemly conflict as that which we are considering; and here, as elsewhere in human nature, we are met with unmistakable traces of

the fall of our first parent. A range of granite mountains, which towers proudly above the alluvial soil of a neighbouring plain and above the softer rocks at its immediate base, speaks to the geologist of a subterranean fire that at some remote epoch had thus upheaved the primal crust of the earth with convulsive violence. And the arrogant pretensions of human thought in the children of Adam speak no less truly of an ancient convulsion which has marred the harmony of the faculties of the soul, and has forced the mind of fallen man into an attitude which instinctively disputes the claims of revelation. But that attitude is no part of the Creator's handiwork; it is due to the creature's own abuse of the perfect freedom of his will. For originally intellect is the ally and discoverer of truth; it finds its highest employment as the instrument of *religious* truth; and Jesus Christ, Who restores the harmony of our nature, speaks, through His Church, "a wisdom," or philosophy, "among them that are perfect[f];" a wisdom of which illuminated intellect is the student and guardian, and which amply recognizes the high and abundant honour which the Creator has put upon His creature's thought.

But the Fall did not merely deprive human reason of the light of grace; it so disturbed the original structure of our nature as to make reason generally the slave of desire instead of its master. And therefore the intellect which exalts itself against revelation is often in reality not free intellect, but intellect working at the secret bidding of an irritated passion. Not that intellect is itself usually conscious that it is thus acting under orders. The passions, like some women, know how to disguise, and even how to recommend, their despotism by the graceful movements and gentle courtesies of a well-simulated obedience. Or at best, intellect is but half

[f] 1 Cor. ii. 6.

conscious that it is not free; and therefore it asserts its freedom with that exaggerated vehemence which persons who feel their place in society to be a little doubtful are apt to employ when putting forward their social claims. Certainly intellect never vaunts its freedom with such nervous eagerness as when it is in conflict with the Revelation of God. For instance, we do not say to ourselves, again and again, that we are the champions of free thought, if we are engaged in the study of pure mathematics. Mathematics do not touch our moral nature; we suspect nothing; we solve an equation as dispassionately as if we were ourselves pure reason, and nothing else; beings without passion, without conscience, without will, without a moral history. But revelation, by its every doctrine and every precept, at once challenges the activity of will and conscience; and the passions are like those watchdogs who rouse the sleeping tenants of remote country-houses at the approach of a stranger; the passions sound an alarm within the soul at the first signs of the coming of the Son of Man. Thus natural intellect meets the heavenly Visitant, sometimes with a movement of sudden sharp irritation, sometimes with a stern but unavowed resolution to resist Him, generally without frankness and real freedom of welcome. Natural intellect when brought face to face with Jesus Christ, behaves at best like a person who feels it necessary to be upon his guard, and to maintain an attitude of secret if not of defiant suspicion.

Look around you, brethren, and take note of the varieties of intellect which enter in various ways into this conflict with religion. There is, first of all, mercenary intellect. This intellect writes or talks at the rate of so much per annum, and on a given understanding. "You take so much, and you write up that minister; you advocate that line of policy; you denounce this institution; you attack that theory; you blacken that public man."—"Done."

Necessity, it may be said, knows no law; and there is an unexpressibly sad proverb about poverty, to the effect that it cannot afford to have a conscience. We need not care to examine that saying too narrowly. Some of us perhaps have known cases, in which really noble souls have bent to a degradation from which they shrank in secret agony; and from which, long since, they would have torn themselves away, if the comfort and even the life of others, near and dear to them, had not been dependent on their sad, unworthy toil. Gladly indeed would I here be silent. But sometimes this hired intellect, in bondage to sharp necessity or to the mere spirit of gain, passionately asserts its monopoly of freedom. It even tells us, the ministers of Christ, who have freely entered His service, and who rejoice in what it calls our fetters, that we are not free. We ought not to be surprised, upon understanding the situation in which such intellect is really placed; but we may be permitted to protest. Certainly we may admit that, under the circumstances, conflict with religion is sufficiently natural. If it were nothing besides, it is at least an expedient for asserting the appearance of freedom, at little cost, and with considerable dramatic effect.

Again, look at self-advertising intellect. Here is a vain man, who has certain powers of thought and expression. This intellect is bent on achieving a reputation, no matter how. It will write something startling, or, as it would say, original. It will deny all that has been affirmed, and depreciate all that has been held in reverence. When it asserts that this or that Book of the Divine Scripture is but a collection of foolish legends, it will take a certain pleasure in thinking of all the varied perplexity, and vexation, and distress, and bustle, and deliberations which will be caused among the religious persons who may chance to meet with its irritating produc-

tion. Probably it has no wish to inflict unnecessary pain. But its object is notoriety; and notoriety is only within its reach under these conditions.

Again, there is sensualized intellect; intellect under the guidance and command of animal passion. This is no fancy species. It would not be difficult to point to whole literatures, characterized by the greatest fertility of thought, by ample power and beauty of language, whose entire drift and purpose is to rouse in the imagination and veins of man those fiery passions which are his worst enemy.

Again, there is the self-reliant or cynical intellect, too independent to be mercenary, too proud to be vain, too self-respecting to be the slave of sense. Yet it is just as little free as is the most mercenary, or vain, or sensualized thought; since in truth it is the slave of a sublime egotism. But its enslavement is well disguised; and its cold, clear, incisive energy passes among men for the very bloom and majesty of perfect intellectual freedom.

We need not examine other varieties. Nor may we forget that here and there, among the earnest opponents of the Gospel, souls are to be found which glow with a pure and devoted love of truth. These are souls, whom adverse circumstances have for awhile bewildered and misled. Their true home is in the camp of Christ. They have not yet found the road to Damascus; but we may safely leave them to the love and providence of the Good God. But with or without them, it is plain that we are in presence of a body of active thought, not the less vigorous because it works for hire, or for vainglory, or for sensual delight, or for some refined or magnificent ambition; not the less vigorous because it is a slave; but which, as being enslaved to powers who are instinctively opposed to the Gospel, is certain to find itself, sooner or later, in conflict with the

living, working power of that Gospel among the minds and hearts of men.

It is noteworthy, and indeed it is implied in the language of the Apostle, that intellectual opposition to Revelation, except on great occasions, and under the leadership of distinguished captains, does not usually seek us Christians in the open field. I do not, indeed, forget Celsus, or Porphyry, or Voltaire, or Strauss. But look at scepticism in the second generation, or as we meet it in everyday life. Its customary instinct is to take refuge on some natural heights, or behind some artificial earthworks. In plain terms, it screens its advance under the cover of some disputed principle, or of some unproved assumption. To "cast down these imaginations" may be less exciting than the whirl and tumult of a general intellectual engagement. But it is the everyday and practical aspect of the conflict which we are considering. And if with limited time, and in so vast a field, it is here necessary to resign one-half, or more than one-half, of the outline before us; let us proceed briefly to notice one or two of the most conspicuous among many false principles and assumptions which now oppose the work of Jesus Christ our Lord in the souls of men. Much will be thereby lost to the subject in the completeness of speculative treatment. More, it may be, will be won; if any Christian who listens, is better enabled to understand and to take his part in the unceasing and mighty struggle, between human error on the one side, and the Truth which came from heaven eighteen centuries ago, on the other.

(*a.*) Now a primary characteristic of sceptical intellect is its unwillingness to make room for faith, by acknowledging the existence of a true province and sphere of Revelation. Such intellect assumes itself to command the whole field of truth. It grudges the admission, that there may exist a higher world, beyond its ken, and over which

it has no real range of vision. Above the sphere of mere sense, there is the province of natural reason. That is granted. But it is tacitly assumed that there is no higher sphere accessible to man. Men do not object to saying with the Apostle, that the Christian is a threefold being, composed of body, soul, and spirit[g]. Yet it is held that spirit, our highest and most ennobling characteristic, has no object-matter beyond that which can be ministered to it by the natural intelligence of the soul. The reason is because natural intellect feels itself humiliated, if it be supposed to be debarred from the sight of any spiritual fact. And since not more than a few facts of a strictly spiritual character are dimly discerned even by the highest natural intelligences, men deem it essential to the supposed dignity of their reason to deny the existence of an order of things which unilluminated reason does not see.

Among students of the natural world, we find no such unworthy sensitiveness respecting the power and range of the bodily organ of sight. Look towards the heavens, and ask the astronomer whether beyond the stars and suns that reveal themselves to his telescopes, there are stars and suns which even his most powerful instruments cannot as yet enable him to detect. He will tell you that by calculations based upon his observations he can determine the existence and movements of such purely invisible bodies with the unerring certainty of mathematical reason. Ask him once more whether there are yet other bodies in the infinitude of space, too remote to be apprehended with exactness and in detail, even by the most penetrating of his formulæ. He will reply, not merely that the existence of such bodies is possible, but that the analogies of his science lead him to regard it as nothing less than certain. Ask, on the other hand, the entomologist, whose micro-

[g] 1 Thess. v. 23.

scope has discovered to him the strange forms which people each drop of water, or each fraction of a cubic inch of atmosphere, whether he has yet reached the last term, the most minute embodiment of the principle of life. He will hesitate to assume that he has yet done more than ascertain the existence of an order of creatures who may be as very monsters in the eyes of an invisible population of beings around and beyond them. It is no discredit to the organs of sense, that even when they are thus stimulated and strengthened by a scientific apparatus, they fail us, at a point where we cannot but feel, that beyond their reach there lies a world which a higher power than sense must discover, and which we explore as best we may under the guidance of inference. Nor should reason be jealous, if, in encountering the weightiest problems that surround our earthly human existence, she herself cannot always satisfy us. She may not complain, if as we ascend the mountain of thought, she reaches a region at which she must leave us in sheer bewilderment to the perilous guidance of imagination; unless indeed she is content to entrust us to the well-attested authority, to the practised eye, and to the sure guardianship of Divine faith.

Reason, indeed, can do much, even beyond the province in which she confessedly reigns. She can prove to man that he possesses an immaterial soul; that his will is really free; that deep in his secret heart there is the mysterious but indelible law which distinguishes right from wrong. Reason, as she studies human society, can give shape to those principles of justice and order, which are essential to its stability. She can even attain to a certain shadowy knowledge of the First Cause of all. She can demonstrate His existence by two or three lines of argument. She can infer that He is One, that He is a personal Being, that He is infinite in His perfections, and unfettered in His action and His will, and that His

creatures are under the strongest possible obligations to seek and obey Him. Certainly, reason is peculiarly happy, if without, at least, the indirect guidance of a supernatural Revelation she can reach as far as this; and she knows well that each step of her advance is certain to be disputed. But she can penetrate no further. Her highest conquests do but suggest problems which she cannot solve; they only afford glimpses of a world on which she may not presume to enter. She has at best discovered enough to make life a dreary mystery, and the prospect of death a frightful nightmare. What knows she of the inner life of God, as He has opened it to the faith of Christians in the august doctrine of the most Holy Trinity? What can she tell us concerning the real nature and effects of sin, concerning the law of its action, or the law of its removal? What can she determine on the all-important and pressing question, whether any and what communion is possible between the human soul and God? What, in other words, has she at command that can meet the needs of the soul of man, as they are met by the Christian doctrines of the atoning Death and mediatorial work of Jesus Christ, of the work of the Holy Spirit, the power of penitence, the power of prayer, the power of the Sacraments? Certainly she has her own sphere and province. We may not ignore it. We may not depreciate it, in the supposed interests of faith; as if faith could only reign when reason was insulted. But reason must accept her providential place. She must make room for faith. She must act as faith's handmaid, not as faith's substitute; or her pride will surely prepare for her a terrible chastisement. There is no saying how low an intelligence may fall, which, persevering in its determination to rise no higher than the range of its natural powers, voluntarily condemns itself to tenant its own dark prison-house, and sinks deeper and deeper into the

abyss, as it madly flies from the true knowledge and love of the Infinite God.

(β.) But when the possibility, the need, and even—to take a long stride—the fact, of a supernatural revelation has been admitted, the rebellious intellect of man renews the cónflict at a point beyond. "At least," it is urged, a stipulation must be made, as to the contents of revelation. Revelation must not include mysteries. Whatever may be revealed, it shall not elude our full mental grasp. We must assume ourselves to possess a verifying faculty which shall eliminate from revelation all that wears the air of mystery; since mystery is inconsistent with that intellectual dignity which becomes us men, even when we are listening to the Most High God."

It would be natural to insist, with Bishop Butler, on the unreasonableness of determining beforehand, what a revelation from God ought or ought not to contain; since we men are in no position to speculate with any success or safety upon such a subject [h]. But let me ask a simple question. What do we mean by mystery? We have, it may be, invested the word with some damaging sense that does not in reality belong to it. Mystery, it may be imagined, is but another name for a confused statement, or for a contradiction, or for an impossibility, or for a purely unintelligible process, or for something which is believed on no sufficient grounds whatever,

[h] Analogy, ii. 3, p. 173. "My design at present is to observe in general, with respect to this whole way of arguing, that upon supposition of a revelation, it is highly credible beforehand, we should be incompetent judges of it to a great degree: and that it would contain many things appearing to us liable to great objections; in case we judge of it otherwise than by the analogy of nature. And therefore, though objections against the evidence of Christianity are most seriously to be considered; yet objections against Christianity itself are, in a great measure, frivolous; almost all objections against it, except those which are alleged against the particular proofs of its coming from God."

or for a reverie of the heated religious imagination. No, believe it, a mystery is none of these things. A mystery is a truth, but a hidden truth[1]. It may be, as the Scriptural use of the word often implies, a truth which was hidden in past times but is manifested now. It may be, as the ordinary modern use of the term would suggest, a truth hidden, in whatever degree, whether from the eye of sense, or from the direct glance of natural reason. We see some truths directly, just as in the open air we gaze with our bodily eye upon the sun shining in the heavens. We

[1] Theodoret "adapts" the classical sense of the word to the New Testament idea: *μυστήριον λέγεται τὸ μὴ πᾶσι δηλούμενον, ἀλλὰ μόνοις τοῖς φίλοις θαρρούμενον.* (In cap. xv. Ep. i. ad Corinth.) The word is used in the New Testament: (1) Of a profound sense which does not lie upon the surface of language, Rev. xvii. 5; 1 Cor. xiv. 2. (2) Of the internal character and laws of a system, whether Divine (St. Matt. xiii. 11, St. Mark iv. 11, St. Luke viii. 10) or diabolical (2 Thess. ii. 7). (3) Of the hidden meaning of a symbolical representation, Rev. i. 20; xvii. 7. (4) Of Divine counsels, hidden for ages in the Mind of God and at length disclosed, such as the design of making one family out of the inhabitants of earth and heaven, Eph. i. 9, and that of bringing the Gentiles to share along with the Jews the blessings of the Gospel, Eph. iii. 3, 9. (5) Of Revealed Truth as containing depths which are with difficulty expressed in language, Eph. vi. 19; so that, after all, much remains mysterious, 1 Cor. ii. 7. (6) Of some profound doctrines in particular, which stretch away into the region of the Incomprehensible, such as the Incarnation, 1 Tim. iii. 9; the change which will pass instantaneously upon the bodies of the living at our Lord's Second Coming, 1 Cor. xv. 51; the mystical union between Christ and His Church, as signified by marriage, Eph. v. 32. (7) Of the deposit of Doctrine and Sacraments committed to the stewardship of the clergy, 1 Cor. iv. 1. For instances of the application of the word to the Sacraments, particularly to the Eucharist, by the Fathers of the Church, see Suicer, Thes. *s. v.* Compare the Language of our Communion Service: "Consider the dignity of that Holy Mystery"—"He hath instituted and ordained Holy Mysteries"—"Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these Holy Mysteries with the spiritual food of the Most Precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ." It is observable that in each of these three passages the compilers of our Liturgy are using their own language, unless (which is very doubtful) in the last passage cited, they are borrowing from an Eastern source; certainly they are not translating from the Sarum Missal in any one of the three.

know other truths indirectly, just as we know that the sun is shining, from observing the ray of sunlight which streams in at the window of the room in which we are sitting. Now a mystery is a truth of the latter kind. It is apprehended as true, it is not comprehended. It does not lie on the surface of things. It cannot be seen in itself. It can only be known from the evidence or symptoms of its presence. Yet the evidence, whatever it be, proves to us that the truth is there; and the truth is not the less a truth because it is itself shrouded from our direct gaze.

Thus St. Paul speaks of the mystery of the Incarnation, and of the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, when alluding to the fact that these divine purposes were hidden for ages in the mind of God, and at length revealed. And he describes marriage as a great mystery, meaning that it embodies a secret correspondence to the union between our Lord and His Church, which is not immediately suggested by the ordinance itself. And the clergy are "stewards of the mysteries of God," that is to say, specially of the Sacraments, each of which is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;" although the presence of the inward grace is inferred, not necessarily from experience, but always from our Saviour's promise. In short the Christian religion surrounds us with mysteries, that is to say, with truths, the real presence of which is obvious to us, but the internal nature and complete range of which we cannot comprehend.

But it is at least equally clear that the wonderful world in which we men pass this stage of our existence, whether the higher world of faith be open to our gaze or not, is a very temple of many and august mysteries [k]. You will

[k] Cf. Bp. Butler, Analogy, p. 191: "Little, surely, need be said to prove that this [the Christian] system, or scheme of things, is but imperfectly comprehended by us. The Scripture expressly asserts it to be so. And indeed one cannot read a passage relating to this *great mystery of godliness*,

walk, perhaps, to-morrow afternoon into the country; and here or there the swelling buds, or the first fresh green of the opening leaf, will remind you that already Spring is about to re-enact before your eyes the beautiful spectacle of her yearly triumph. Every where around you are evidences of the existence and movement of a mysterious power which you can neither see, nor touch, nor define, nor measure, nor understand. This power lives speechless, noiseless, unseen, yet energetic, in every bough above your head, in every blade of grass beneath your feet. It bursts forth from the grain into the shoot, from the branch into the bud; it bursts into leaf, and flower, and fruit. It creates bark, and fibre; it creates height, and bulk; it yields grace of form and lustre of colour. It is incessant in its labour; it is prodigal of its beauty; it is uniformly generous and bountiful in its gifts to man. Yet, in itself, what is it? You give it a name; you call it vegetation. And perhaps you are a botanist; you trace out and you register the variety of its effects, and the signs of its movement. But after all you have only labelled it. Although it is so common, it is not in reality familiar to you. Although you have watched it unthinkingly from your childhood upwards, and perhaps see in it nothing remarkable now, you may well pause in wonder and awe before it, for of a truth it is a mystery. What is it in itself,—this power which is so certainly around you, yet which so perfectly escapes you when you attempt to detect or to detain it in your grasp? What is it, this pervading force, this life-principle, this incomprehensible yet most certainly present fact, but an assertion

but what immediately runs up into something which shows us our ignorance in it; as every thing in nature shows us our ignorance in the constitution of nature. And whoever will seriously consider that part of the Christian scheme which is revealed in Scripture, will find so much more unrevealed as will convince him that, to all the purposes of judging and objecting, we know as little of it as of the constitution of nature."

of the principle of mystery which robes the soil of God's earth with life and beauty, that every where it may cheer the faith and rebuke the pride of man? Yes, when next you behold the green field or the green tree, be sure that you are in the presence of a very sacrament of nature; your eye rests upon the outward and visible sign of an inward and wholly invisible force[l].

Or look at those other forces with which you seem to be so much at home, and which you term attraction and gravitation[m]. What do you really know about them?

[l] In his chapter on 'Christianity a scheme imperfectly comprehended' (Anal. ii. 4), Butler cites "the change of seasons, the ripening of the fruits of the earth, the very history of a flower" as analogies in nature to "the long series of intricate means" whereby God was pleased to work out the recovery and salvation of the world. "It is certain there is somewhat in this matter quite beyond our comprehension; but the mystery is as great in nature as in Christianity, p. 196. It is not more astonishing that the world was not redeemed by a flash of Divine Light than that a plant does not grow up in a second. We know as little really about one as the other.

[m] Cf. Bp. Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, ed. 1732, vol. ii. Dialogue 7, pp. 145-8. "*Euph.* Let us examine what idea we can frame of force abstracted from body, motion, and outward sensible effects. For myself, I do not find that I have or can have any such idea. *Alc.* Surely every one knows what is meant by force. *Euph.* And yet I question whether every one can form a distinct idea of force. Let me intreat you, Alciphron, be not amused by terms, lay aside the word *force*, and exclude every other thing from your thoughts, and then see what precise idea you have of force. *Alc.* Force is that in bodies which produceth motion and other sensible effects. *Euph.* It is, then, something distinct from those effects. *Alc.* It is. *Euph.* Be pleased now to exclude the consideration of its subject and effects, and contemplate force in itself in its own precise idea. *Alc.* I profess I find it no such easy matter. *Euph.* Take your own advice, and shut your eyes to assist your meditation. Upon this Alciphron having closed his eyes, and mused a few minutes, declared he could make nothing of it. And that, replied *Euphanor*, which it seems neither you nor I can frame an idea of, by your own remark of men's minds and faculties being made much alike, we may suppose others have no more an idea of than we. *Alc.* We may. *Euph.* But, notwithstanding all this, it is certain there are many speculations, reasonings, and disputes, refined subtilties and nice distinctions about this same force. And to explain its nature, and distinguish the several notions or kinds of it, the terms *gravity, reaction, vis inertiæ, vis insita, vis*

You name them: perhaps you can repeat a mathematical expression which measures their action. But after all you have only named and described an effect; you have not accounted for, you have not penetrated into, you have not unveiled its cause. Why, I ask, in the nature of things, should such laws reign around us? They do reign, but why? what is the power which determines gravitation? where does it reside? how is it to be seized, apprehended, touched, examined? There it is: but there, inaccessible to your keenest study, it remains veiled and buried. You would gladly capture and subdue and understand it; but, as it is, you are forced to confess the presence of something which you cannot even approach.

And you yourselves,—fearfully and wonderfully made as you are,—what are you but living embodiments, alike in your lower and your higher natures, and in the law of their union, of this all-pervading principle of mystery? The life-power which feels and moves in your bodies successfully eludes the knife of the anatomist, as he lays bare each nerve and each muscle that contributes to the perfection of feeling and movement. Yet how much more utterly mysterious is your human nature when you

impressa, vis mortua, vis viva, impetus, momentum, solicitatio, conatus, and divers others suchlike expressions have been used by learned men; and no small controversies have arisen about the notions or definitions of these terms. It has puzzled men to know whether force is spiritual or corporeal, whether it remains after action, how it is transferred from one body to another. Strange paradoxes have been framed about its nature, properties, and proportions: for instance, that contrary forces may at once subsist in the same quiescent body: that the force of percussion in a small particle is infinite: for which and other curiosities of the same sort, you may consult *Borellus de vi percussionis,* the *Lezioni Academiche of Toricelli,* the *Exercitations of Hermanus,* and other writers. . . . Upon the whole, therefore, may we not pronounce, that excluding body, time, space, motion, and all its sensible measures and effects, we shall find it as difficult to form an idea of force as of grace? *Alc.* I do not know what to think of it."

examine its higher aspects; when you analyze mind, and personality, and that marvellous mystery of language, wherein thought takes nothing less than a physical form, and passes by means of a sensible vehicle from one immaterial spirit to another! Truly if it were possible to linger here, it would be hard to terminate the catalogue of mysteries; so extraordinary, so familiar, so near to us always and every where, yet always and every where so above our comprehension. But I forbear.

My brethren, you will pardon me if I say that to object to mystery as a feature of a Divine Revelation is at least irrational. Surely, as we mount in the scale of being, we must expect an increase both in the number and magnitude of these hidden truths. And, when we reach His throne Who is the Summit and Source of all; we can hardly suppose, that, because He has deigned to lay bare to us some of the secrets of His Nature and some of the laws of His action upon our life, this His revelation will differ from the natural world which reflects Him, in that it will altogether discard the presence of mystery. Yet when it is no longer a secret objection against the doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity, or of the Incarnation, or of original sin, or of the Satisfaction which Jesus offered on the Cross, or of the efficacy of the Sacraments, that these doctrines in various ways embody, as they do, the principle of mystery; the soul has in very deed succeeded in casting down an 'imagination,' an entrenched fortress with formidable powers of resistance, which too often "exalts itself against the knowledge of God;" and it is, so far, in a fair way to "bring its" whole "thought into the obedience of Christ."

(γ.) But there is a third line of resistance upon which the wayward reason of man falls back in its opposition to revealed truth. It grants that a revelation has been given. It allows that portions at least of the revealed truth are

mysteries; that they are in themselves mysteries, although their existence is revealed. 'But at least,' it exclaims, 'revelation shall not be dogmatic. If she is still to meet with public acceptance, Christianity must abandon the pretension to offer a fixed, sharply-defined body of truth to the acceptance or rejection of the soul of man.' Let the religion of Jesus only come to the men of our time as a finished poem; and they will read, they will learn, they will love it. They will not inquire too accurately whether it be literally true. Nor will it put such force upon their thought and will as to make any violent or serious change in the natural current of their life. They will indeed be much as they would have been without it. And yet, it will exercise a kindly, gentle sway over thought and society. It will breathe upon human character a soft, yet elevating influence. And if it exacts little intellectual homage, and exerts no tangible moral force, it will at least have the merit of provoking no keen resistance. Such, we are told, must be the religion of our day. Intellect has condemned the principle of religious dogma; and religion is accordingly bidden to accommodate herself to the changed circumstances and imperious necessities of the time.

On close inspection it will probably be found that the dislike of clear doctrinal statements is only a disguised form of opposition to the truth which those statements embody. If, for instance, a man believes in the existence of one Supreme Being, he has no objection to saying explicitly that there is One God. It does not occur to him, that in making that statement he is guilty of an intellectual narrowness, or of a want of perfect good taste. Nor, supposing him to be a serious theist, does he hold it necessary presently to balance the profession of belief in God by some other statement which shall reduce his assertion to the level of an uncertainty. Yet to say that there is One

God is to make an essentially dogmatic statement. Every man who makes that statement intelligently, knows that it has a tremendous bearing on the belief of millions, alas! of the human race at this very moment. Yet the man makes the statement for the simple reason that he has no doubt of the truth which it embodies. If, then, he presently hesitates to say that Jesus Christ is truly God as well as truly Man, or that the Death of Jesus on the cross was a Propitiatory Offering for human sin; this, we must suppose, is because he does not believe the truths which are thus stated in human language. If he urges that a dogmatic statement is more or less unsatisfactory in that, owing to the imperfection of human speech, it leaves unanswered, or rather it suggests, many concomitant questions; it may be rejoined that this is no less true when you assert the Unity of God, than when you assert the Godhead or the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. If he dislikes dogma because, forsooth, dogma is the "stagnation," or the "imprisonment," or the "paralysis" of thought; the substance of his objection may be unnoticed for the moment, while we observe that it applies to his statement that there is One God, just as much as to any other proposition in the Nicene or Athanasian Creeds. When he confesses that there is One God, he voluntarily renounces the right and the wish to entertain the idea of two gods or of many gods. And when we Christians profess our belief in the Atoning Virtue of our Saviour's Death, or in the mighty regenerating power of His baptism, we renounce with all our hearts the desire to suppose that the Death of Jesus was a mere martyrdom, or that baptism is a graceful, but, speaking spiritually, a useless piece of ceremonial. In either case, faith finds in the dogmatic statement its support. In either case, unbelief can see in the statement which it disbelieves nothing but a fetter or a prison wall. Faith discerns in dogma the regulation of

its thought, not its stoppage, not its imprisonment, not its petrification; just as the mathematician finds in the axioms which are the base of his science, the fixed principles which guide his onward progress, not the tyrannical obstacle which enthralls and checks him. And unbelief decries dogma, not because dogma is really an impediment to faith, but because it is faith's true and trusty friend. The real crime of dogma is, that it treats as settled and certain that which unbelief would fain regard as doubtful or false. If you believe a thing to be true, you have no objection to saying so. And when Christianity is warned not to be dogmatic, it is irresistibly implied, that however beautiful she may be, she must not assume her creed to be absolutely true.

Here is the third "high thing which exalts itself against the knowledge of God" in this our day and country, namely, the dislike of fixed doctrinal statements. No one will deny that false dogmas have been, and are being proposed to the faith of this or that body of Christians. All will admit that even true dogmas may be upheld by incompetent authority. But these are questions of detail; and the point before us is a broad question of principle. If with the Apostle we believe in the everlasting Gospel, we rejoice with him to proclaim its truth. Nay more, when he exclaims, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed[n]," we answer tenderly, seriously, firmly, "Amen."

You are repelled, it would seem, by this last, this crowning exigency of Divine truth. Yet your prejudice against dogma is the last stronghold of the enemy; it is a position from which he must be dislodged at any cost, or all previous victories may soon be forfeited. Surely it is

[n] Gal. i. 8.

of little avail to grant that a Revelation has been given, and even that this heavenly gift is replete with mystery, if no one revealed truth may be stated in terms as absolutely certain; if the range, the powers, the effects of no one mystery may be presented to the vision of the believing soul. If religion is to be a practical thing, it must depend, not upon beautiful thoughts, but upon clearly-defined certainties. Its truths must come to us in a form which enables us to carry them with us, and to bring them to bear upon our motives in the hour of temptation. When tempted we need something solid to fall back upon; not a picture, not a mist, not a view, not an hypothesis, but a fact. For eighteen centuries, Christianity has responded in various ways to this supreme necessity of the soul of man. And we may be sure that if she had done otherwise, she would long ago have ceased to command interest at the hands of those who seek in religion, not an amusement for the passing hour, but a kind friend, with a firm hand, who will guide them through the changes and chances of this mortal life to the gate of that other world which we must all, in whatever guise, reach at last.

You may naturally ask, my brethren, what place in a Lenten course of sermons there can reasonably be found for considerations so abstract, so apparently removed from the immediate and pressing wants of the penitent and struggling soul, as have been some of the foregoing.

It is enough to reply by pointing to the actual circumstances of our own day, and especially in this place. Penitence presupposes at least a certain measure of faith. And faith is proscribed by that undue exaltation of intellect which leaves no room for it, and which denounces the principles of mystery and dogma. Before a man can kneel with a broken and contrite heart beneath the Cross of the Redeemer of the world, these high things which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God must be

levelled, and his thought must be brought into the obedience of Christ. The great conflict which rages between the pride of natural intellect and the claims of faith, is fought out on no remote or imaginary battle-field. Every thoughtful mind, in this our distracted and anxious day, is the scene upon which these hostile principles engage in fierce and deadly combat. And upon the issue of that combat to many a man who hears me, may depend nothing less momentous than the salvation of his soul, and his place in eternity. There are men who are shielded from coarse forms of outward temptation, and whose passions have never risen up with impetuous fierceness to break the resolution or to mar the purity of their spiritual life. Happy, indeed, are such privileged souls. Yet it may be that their probation still turns upon the question, whether or no they will make a sincere act of intellectual submission to the Reason, the Love of their God. Assuredly the loftiest created intellect may submit to that Reason without degradation; assuredly the most blameless soul will need in its day of trial, at the bar of Infinite Purity, the tenderness of that pardoning Love. A time must quickly come when the struggle which yet waxes fierce will have ceased for ever; when the hopes, and watchwords, and theories, and enterprises which dazzle the eye, as it gazes on the busy tangled scene, will have passed with the generation which has projected them into the silence of eternity. "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down: and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day[o]." Beyond the weakness and agony of the last sickness, beyond the darkness and corruption of the grave, there rises the vision of a Throne of Judgment and of an everlasting world. Think of it well, brethren, and take your parts. Believe it, there is a submission of

[o] Isa. ii. 17.

thought which is not slavery; and there is a haughty mental independence which, alas! knows itself to be any thing but true freedom. They do not really suffer defeat who make their submission to God: they who, while opposing Him, seem to conquer, can win but a perilous and shortlived victory. On this side is Paul, first a persecutor, then an Apostle; and Justin, once a philosopher, then an Apologist and Martyr; and Augustine, who out of a sensualized heretic and free-thinker, is raised by Divine grace to be a Saint and Doctor of the universal Church. On that side is Julian, Emperor and Apostate, with endowments of character and gifts of intellect so calculated to win our highest interest and admiration; yet ending a reign in which rare accomplishments, and consummate address, and vast political power had been vainly employed against the Gospel, with the despairing confession, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilæan[p]."

In this short life we see only a small portion of the full results of thought and action. But another world already casts its shadow across our path; and we often anticipate the endless future with a keen presentiment which is not less than tragical. Assuredly intellect has its rights, its privileges, its duties, its triumphs. But faith has likewise her own province and her unshared capacities; and while all around her is change and uncertainty, she gazes unfalteringly upon the Unseen and the Eternal. She knows that for the Object on which her eye is fixed, all else, if need be, may well be sacrificed, since all else will one day pass away. She knows that "God hath so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life[q]."

[p] Theod. III. 25. [q] St. John III. 16.

SERMON VIII.

LESSONS OF THE HOLY MANGER.

St. Luke ii. 12.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

THUS does the Angel end his message, when announcing our Saviour's Birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Here and to-day it might be deemed unnecessary to observe that the apparition and language of the Angel, as well as the persons and conduct of the shepherds, are matters of historical and literal fact. Still, it is not uninstructive to observe how earnestly the unbelief of men has striven to escape from this conclusion. The earlier Rationalists maintained that the Evangelist was describing only an ordinary occurrence, which had been invested with supernatural interest and meaning by the ignorance and the superstition of a devout peasantry. According to one writer of the Naturalistic school, the Angel was a messenger from Bethlehem, who carried a light which caught the eye of the shepherds; and the chanting of the heavenly host was only the merry song of a party of friends who accompanied the messenger[a]. According to Paulus, the Blessed Virgin

[a] Eck. Versuch über die Wundergeschichten des N.T., quoted by Strauss, Leb. Jesu, Erst. Th. c. 4. § 33.

had been staying with a herdsman, and had communicated to the members of his family her expectations of giving birth to the Messiah. For persons living in or near the city of David this communication would have possessed very deep interest. It happened that one night, whilst engaged in watching their flocks, they observed a luminous appearance in the atmosphere. They naturally interpreted this phenomenon to mean that the stranger who was lodged in their foddering-stall was delivered of the Messiah; and to their over-excited minds the movement of the meteoric light appeared to represent a choir of angels singing hymns of praise. On returning home they found their anticipations confirmed by the event; and what had been in reality a conjectural explanation of the natural object which had met their eye, was now believed to have been a heavenly message which had been actually delivered to them by heavenly messengers [b].

Strauss himself exposes the weak points of this last representation with characteristic acuteness. It rests, he observes, on an assumption which contradicts the express statement of St. Luke. It assumes that the shepherds were previously acquainted with Mary's expectation of giving birth to a Messiah. But St. Luke does not any where describe the manger as belonging to the shepherds. He does not imply any the slightest communication between the shepherds and the Holy Family, previous to our Saviour's Birth. After giving the narrative of the Nativity, he goes on to speak of the shepherds, as of a new and distinct subject, wholly disconnected with the manger. "There were in the same country shepherds [c]." The holy reserve of the Blessed Virgin, which led her to conceal her expectations even from her be-

[b] Paulus, Ex. Handb. § 180, quoted by Strauss, ubi supra.

[c] St. Luke ii. 8: ποιμένες, not οἱ ποιμένες.

trothed husband, would surely have led her to be equally silent on the subject when in the presence of these peasants, even if she really had conversed with them at all, in the way presumed by the imagination of Paulus. But, moreover, St. Luke states that the shepherds first learnt the birth of a Saviour from the Angel who appeared to them. They might test the truth of the Angel's message by visiting Bethlehem, where he had told them that they would find the Babe lying in the manger. If the shepherds had previously heard from St. Mary that she was to be the Mother of the Messiah, they would have seen a confirmation of her statement in the (so termed) meteoric appearance: whereas, on the contrary, according to St. Luke, they were to find in the Holy Babe a proof of the truth that the apparition itself and the accompanying message had not been an illusion.

In this way the naturalistic attempt to explain the Gospel account of the appearance to the shepherds at Bethlehem has failed. Such attempts must invariably lead to the discredit of the narrative which they are put forward to justify. That narrative teems with miracle, and to deny the miraculous facts which it records is effectually to discredit it. Moreover, as Strauss elsewhere observes of the naturalistic method of Paulus, it is driven to substitute miraculous coincidences for Divine miracles[d]. Strauss indeed himself sees in this evangelical history not a narrative of what actually took place, but a mythus which represents the after-thought of Christendom. To construe the history literally would, according

[d] L. J. vol. i. p. 142. "So hat Paulus hier nur ein göttliches Wunder in ein Wunder des Zufalls umgewandelt. Ob aber gesagt wird; bei Gott ist kein Ding unmöglich; oder: dem Zufall ist kein Ding unmöglich, ist beides gleich precär und unwissenschaftlich." Quoted by Mill, Chr. Advoc. 1841, p. 5 (Myth. Int. ed. Webb, p. 93).

to Strauss, be impossible; since such construction involves a necessary admission of the real existence and ministry of the holy angels. When, however, it is asserted that angels are not mentioned in any Jewish writings before the Maccabean period, and that the names and order of the heavenly hierarchy were imported into Jewish thought from Babylon; it may suffice to reply that in no other assertions has the advanced Rationalism shown itself more recklessly insensible to facts than in this[e]. The real objection lies not merely against angels, but against the whole principle of the supernatural. No evidence of particular facts can make head against the force of an invincible prejudice which has already condemned them. But while Strauss's real objection is thus fundamental and antecedent to all considerations of detail, he argues against this particular angelic apparition on the ground of its uselessness. Was it designed to inform the nation at large of the birth of a Messiah? But it was still unheard of in Jerusalem, when Jerusalem was visited by the Wise Men. Was its aim limited to an immediate effect upon the minds of the shepherds? But of that effect no traces are preserved in the evangelical narrative. Was it intended simply to set forth the glory of Messias? But Strauss presumes to think that such an object would be unworthy of Almighty God. These arguments may safely be left to themselves. But the question may be asked seriously why such an apparition, if it took place at all, was never subsequently appealed to by our Lord in proof of His Messiahship? Why did He not refer to a testimony in His favour so entirely above suspicion, so independent, as it might have seemed, of Himself and of His Family, so likely to have become a public and popular tradition respecting Him?

Now it is admitted that the Greek of St. Luke proves

[e] Cf. Dr. Pusey's Daniel the Prophet, pp. 513 sqq., especially pp. 540-546.

that he believed himself to be writing history, and it is strange that this "highly educated" Evangelist should have failed to perceive the asserted inconsistency between his earlier and his later narrative, if any such inconsistency existed. But, in truth, while his critics spin their fine-drawn theories, St. Luke writes with (and he assumes his readers to possess) a knowledge of human nature. The Evangelist had lived among men who had witnessed greater wonders than the vision of Bethlehem. Those wonders, although wrought before their eyes, had had no sort of effect in forcing them to believe in the mission of the Worker. Was it likely that the prejudice which could ignore or discredit a present miracle, would believe, upon the testimony of a company of shepherds, a past supernatural occurrence pointing to the same unwelcome conclusions? Was it to be expected that our Lord, Whose appeal to prophecy in support of His claims was rejected with contempt, would appeal to the witness of these simple peasants, when their story, like the evidence of the man born blind[f], would only and certainly be accepted as an illustration of their own religious ignorance? There were very sufficient reasons, we know, for treasuring such a narrative in the Holy Family. She who kept all the sayings which had reference to her Divine Son, and pondered them in her heart[g], would assuredly have so treasured it. But it is abundantly clear why no such history would have been appealed to by our Lord in the course of His public ministry. The accounts we possess of the prevailing temper of the Jewish mind during that period show how little such an appeal would have answered its purpose.

In itself the mythical theory of Strauss presents greater difficulties than the naturalism of Paulus. It

[f] St. John ix. 34.

[g] St. Luke ii. 19.

is indeed sufficiently difficult to suppose that St. Luke is merely describing a beautiful impression, which, by a singular although, as we are told, natural coincidence, was present at one moment to the minds of a whole company of shepherds, without being occasioned by any corresponding sight that met their eyes, or by any sound that fell upon their ears. But it is still more difficult to account for the insertion, by a serious writer, of a large block of purely legendary matter in a most precious record, the general character of which is admitted to be historical. And this difficulty is further increased when it is remembered that the presumed insertion must have taken place, if at all, in an age far removed from those primitive times when the imagination of a heathen people might be expected spontaneously to produce mythical narratives, and moreover, beneath the eyes of critics, generally keen, always hostile, but at the time of this insertion, as it would appear, unaccountably supine and uninterested.

(*a.*) By simple attention to the terms of the Scripture narrative, we may understand the true purpose of the appearance to the shepherds at Bethlehem. It was indeed designed to announce the Birth of the expected Christ. But it was also intended to moderate, or rather to correct, those false expectations concerning Him which were rife in the Jewish opinion of the time. That opinion would have been shared in their measure by the shepherds not less than by other classes of the people. In an Asiatic society a shepherd would have occupied a different position from any which European standards would suggest; and in the Jewish theocracy this mode of life had been in more than one instance signally honoured. It was when "Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law," that the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst

of a bush[h]. And in an after age the Lord "chose David His servant; and took him away from the sheepfolds. As he was following the ewes great with young ones He took him, that he might feed Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance[i]." Amos of Tekoah was untrained in any of the prophetical schools; he was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees when he was called by God's Holy Spirit to prophecy[k]. To a religious Israelite, then, it would have seemed that the shepherds were the natural recipients of an explanatory vision. And like the disciples of a later day, the shepherds would have looked for a powerful and conquering Prince. They expected a national deliverer; they looked for the inmate of a palace, for the heir of a throne. The first words of the Angel, so markedly alluding to the well-known prophecy of Micah[l], might have encouraged such an expectation: "Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, the Lord's Christ[m]." But there was another side of the prophecies concerning Messiah, which had been generally forgotten amid the political wrongs and popular impulses of a conquered race. It was easy to dwell on the picture presented by the second or the seventy-second Psalm; it was not easy to understand the meaning of the twenty-second. Yet it was undeniable that the picture of a Sufferer in the one Psalm was as truly a part of the Messianic predictions as the pictures of a Prince conquering His foes and administering a world-wide empire in the others. Daniel's description of the Son of Man, brought in glory to the Ancient of Days[n], would have been to the people at large more welcome than

h Exodus iii. 1, 2.
i Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72.
k Amos i. 1; vii. 14, 15.
l Micah v. 2.
m St. Luke ii. 10, 11.
n Dan. vii. 13.

Isaiah's language about One Who "had a Visage more marred than any man, and a Form more than the sons of men[o]." And therefore the first announcement of the Angel was followed by words which, if they did not convey a passing shade of disappointment, at least must have been words for which those who heard them can hardly have been prepared. "This shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find *a* Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger." There is no trace of any shock to the faith of the shepherds; although the lowly manger where the cattle were fed would not have been the ideal throne on which the imagination of these countrymen would have expected to find the Prince of Israel. It is possible that in that humbled Royalty they may have seen into the deeper sense of prophecy. Already they may have discerned a presentiment of the coming Suffering, Humiliation, Sacrifice. The "sign" was at any rate a practical direction, which admitted of being verified. The heavenly choir, after singing a hymn of triumph around that favoured seraph who was privileged to announce his Master's Birth as Man to the men of Bethlehem, melted from their gaze, while vanishing, as it seemed, into the remote heights of heaven. And forthwith "the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger[p]."

(β.) In sharp contrast with the penury and lowliness of the scene which met the eyes of the shepherds, in what Justin Martyr, writing about the middle of the second century, calls "a certain cave very close to the village[q]"

[o] Isa. lii. 14.

[p] St. Luke ii. 15, 16.

[q] St. Justin. Mart., Dial. cum Tryph. c. 78. When our Lord was born

of Bethlehem, was the living faith of the people touching the Person and dignity of the coming Messiah. For us Christians, the whole of the Old Testament is, in different degrees and senses, Christian ground. We see Christ every where in Scripture, as we see God every where in Nature. We therefore experience a certain difficulty in seizing with perfect accuracy that line of demarcation between Messianic and non-Messianic predictions which was recognized by the Jewish interpreters. There is no necessity for dwelling here on the promised seed of the Woman, on the promises of the patriarchal period, or on those great classical places in the prophets which Jews and Christians alike refer to the King Messiah. But we observe in the pages of such a writer as Schöttgen, that the doctrine of a coming Messiah was in itself among the Jews a very highly elaborated doctrine. Prominent among the various beliefs that were combined in it was the belief that He would be superhuman. When, indeed, He is called the King, Shiloh, the Shepherd, the Light, the Redeemer, the Angel of the Covenant, the Angel of the Face of God, the Angel of God, Michael, the Servant, we detect varying anticipations of His ministerial or redemptive work. Again, names such as David, the Son of David, the Son of Man, the Shoot, the Man of little countenance or stature, point clearly to His real Humanity. But such titles as the First One, the Son of God, the Schekinah, Jehovah, the Holy and Blessed God, the Word of Jehovah, must be explained by reference to His Divinity[r]. The Messianic doctrine, in its popular, as distinct from its Scriptural form, had taken full shape before the Christian era. It had undergone modifications, suggested by the disasters of the Jewish people; but its

(Justin says), St. Joseph, unable to find a lodging in Bethlehem, ἐν σπηλαίᾳ τινὶ σύνεγγυς τῆς κώμης κατέλυσε. See Ellicott, Hist. Lect. p. 62.

[r] Schöttgen, Hor. Heb. vol. ii. de Messiâ, lib. i. c. 1. pp. 4–17.

main features were intact. It was not confined to the Rabbinical schools; it roused and was moulded by popular enthusiasm; the people, even more than their teachers, had debased it in the later age of their annals by a political and earthly colouring. The Gospel history alone shows that, at the period of the Incarnation, this doctrine was a matter of general interest and discussion. The shepherds would doubtless have expressed their belief in it less accurately than the doctors of the law. But deep in the heart of the people, and strong enough to maintain itself against adverse appearances, was this expectation of a great Deliverer. He may have been chiefly looked for as a Redeemer from political bondage; but His Spiritual claims and, above and underneath all, His Divinity were only lost sight of, they were not altogether forgotten, under the pressure of national misfortunes. "A Saviour which is Christ the Lord," the received reading of the Angel's words, is not then really larger in its theological implication than the critically questionable substitute "the Lord's Christ[s]." The shepherds knelt before the Child of Mary; for like us Christians, they might have seen in Him One Whose "Name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father," no less than One in Whom human tenderness and Divine foresight combine as in "the Prince of Peace[t]."

And if on any day in the year, it is on Christmas Day that the Church of Christ owes to our Lord and Saviour an especial acknowledgment of His Divinity. At Easter, He is shown to be the Son of God with power; His Godhead flashes through the radiance of His glorified Manhood. On the Ascension festival, He returns to His heavenly throne as the King of Glory. Even on Good Friday, while it is His Godhead that imparts its infinite

[s] Tisch. has ὁ Χριστὸς Κύριος. [t] Isaiah ix. 6.

value to His Sacrifice, the moral heroism of the Great Sufferer is felt to illumine the darkness and to transfigure the shame and degradation of the Cross. It clothes His Death with the spoils and emblems of victory. But within the precincts of the manger at Bethlehem, the weakness, the dependence of infancy is relieved by no recorded miraculous distinctions. Nor, unless faith be at hand to remind us Who the Child of Mary really is, are we conscious of the ineffable moral beauty of this profound self-abasement of the Infinite and Eternal Being. Therefore never is it more necessary than to-day that the truth of our Saviour's Godhead should be clearly present to faith. It has been remarked, that no creature when young is so abject in its dependent helplessness as man. But our Lord accepts the feebleness, the defencelessness, the peculiar and relatively unmatched humiliation of human infancy. The first Adam, His creature and His prototype, had issued from the Hand of God with fully developed powers of mind and body. But Jesus, when coming "to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin[u]," will not shroud His earliest human life from the race which it ennobles. He will not retire behind a veil of silence, still less behind a veil of legend. St. Mark, and even St. John, shall not alone be His biographers: He will proclaim His infant weakness to all the ages of the Church from the pages of St. Matthew and St. Luke. The shepherds are but the pioneers of the sixty generations of Christendom; and with them, year by year, the Church gazes into the depths of the Incarnation, at the manger-bed of her Infant-Lord. With them she adores His glory, as she listens to the angels who herald His Nativity; with them she marvels at His self-humiliation, as she visits in spirit and in truth the stable of Bethlehem.

[u] Collect for Christmas Day.

There are those who, not comprehending the moral greatness of such humiliation, have wished it had been otherwise. Docetism is nearly as old as Christianity. And the cry of Marcion, "Aufer a nobis pannos et dura præsepia," was but an anticipation of feelings which have led some modern writers to attempt the erasure of the story of the Infancy from the pages of the Gospel. For such men, the swaddling-clothes and the manger of Bethlehem are too energetic an illustration in history of the statement of St. Paul, that "Christ Jesus emptied Himself" of His glory[x]. Yet if it is easy to wrong God by denying His greatness, it is easier to wrong Him by denying His condescensions. When once the Incarnation is believed at all seriously, its successive degrees of humiliation become relatively insignificant. And when, as at the manger of Bethlehem, the mind can discover nothing of the greatness, nothing but the weakness of human life, the countervailing reality of our Saviour's Godhead should be most thankfully and clearly confessed.

My brethren, Jesus Christ is God. His Divinity is not any acquired decoration of His Human Soul in His maturer years. It is not merely the highest degree of creaturely likeness to the Universal Father. It is not the reward and fruit of a tender and delicate spiritual conscience. It is not the faultless and royal lustre of a soul perpetually communing with God. Our Lord's Divinity is not the mere crown and beauty of His Manhood; it is not the moral beauty or power that went forth from Him, when as Man He had in His sublime perfection reached what other men account the superhuman. Still less is it either the reflected admiration of a loving and grateful disciple, or the idealizing effort of an infant Church, warm in its reverential love, and too intent on worship to be capable of reserve or of criticism. It is not a metaphor,

[x] Phil. ii. 7.

it is a fact. The Godhead of Jesus is the great and solemn fact which makes the record of the Life of Jesus in the Gospel unlike any other record in the world. This fact it is which underlies and illuminates the Gospel history throughout. It is as true that Jesus Christ is God, when He lies in the manger at Bethlehem, as when the Resurrection and the Ascension have witnessed to His indestructible Life, and He reigns at the Right Hand of Power. His own references to His pre-existence are as really proofs of His Divinity as are His more explicit declarations of this truth; since, (as was again and again shown by the great Father who, under God, carried the Church through her struggle with Arianism,) if you admit Christ's existence before His Incarnation, you must perforce accept the doctrine of His Consubstantial Oneness with the Father, or you must fall back upon a theory which is really polytheistic—the theory of a superior and of an inferior deity[y].

How carefully does the Church remind us in the Epistle and Gospel of to-day of the true dignity of our Blessed Saviour. As children, we may probably have wondered why it is that on Christmas Day the story of the Birth of Christ is banished to a lesson[z]. Indeed, it is remarkable that the Gospel and Epistle, one of which, on all the other high festivals of the Church, seems to make especial provision for the young and for the poor by narrating the event of the day, are on this most popular and, if the phrase be allowable, most homely of festivals, difficult and elaborate statements of abstract doctrine. It might be thought that such arrangements proved little, or were matters of chance. But this opinion could only satisfy

y e. g. Cf. S. Athan. Ep. de Synod. Arim. et Seleuc. c. 3, § 24, where he is pressing this argument on the Semi-Arians. So Orat. contr. Arian. ii. c. 25, § 10.

z Second Lesson for Morning Service. St. Luke, chap. ii. to verse 15.

those, who have given scant attention to the connexion between early liturgical traditions and the belief and love of Primitive Christendom. It might be urged that in the pre-Reformation service for Christmas Day there were two other sets of Epistles and Gospels, in which the usual law of selection is complied with. But this would be no apology for the actual provisions of our Reformed Liturgy. Nor would it account for the fact that at the great mid-day service of the feast, our present Epistle and Gospel have been used for at least fourteen centuries. Can we fail to recognize the real principle of the selection? Is it not an earthly copy of that heavenly economy, whereby at each of the great humiliations of the Son of Man there was a vision of angels, sent, as if to redress the over-weighted balance, and to offer to Jesus, before the eyes of His creatures, some sort of reparation? To-day our dull spirits *might* see nothing beyond or beneath the swaddling-clothes. We *might* fail to detect those rays of shrouded glory which lighten the gloom and gild the sombre poverty of the manger at Bethlehem. Therefore the Church warns us from the Epistle to the Hebrews that we are in the presence of the Brightness of the Father's Glory and of the Express Image of His Being[a]. She proclaims that He is higher than the highest intelligences of heaven by virtue of His regal offices and majesty, and yet more by His oneness in Divine Nature with the Source and Fountain of Godhead[b]. She bids us observe with St. John, that it is the Eternal Word or Reason of the Father[c], Whose existence was a happy guess of Platonism, a tradition of Rabbinism, a truth of the Old Testament, now fully revealed as the Father's Peer and Equal in Eternity, in Creation, in Providence, Who is made flesh and dwells

[a] Heb. i. 3. For this earlier meaning of ὑπόστασις, cf. Mill, Nature of Christianity, p. 111; Bp. Forbes, Nicene Creed, p. 137

[b] Heb. i. 4–14. [c] St. John i. 1, 2.

among us[d]. Faith may now behold His glory, and man may become the child of God[e]. On this day, when His Human Nature moves our human sympathy, I had almost dared to say our human compassion; we may not, we dare not forget, nay, we are constrained, we rejoice to acknowledge the Godhead of our Incarnate Saviour. For us Christians this confession of the Deity of Jesus is no lifeless formula or dead dogma. It is not an unwelcome admission, grudgingly yielded by us in obedience to the pressure of orthodox formularies, or to the sterner necessities of honest criticism. It is a living, an intense conviction, resting at once upon authority and upon conscience. It is a conviction to part with which is to part with all that can really brighten the dark prison-house of the human spirit, since to deny the Godhead of Jesus, is to forfeit the essence of Christianity. Surely on this day the whole voice of Christendom makes one confession; the whole heart of the Church warms with the glow of one glorious truth. In the humblest village churches, and in the noblest cathedrals of Europe, the Christian world bends with the shepherds before the Babe in the manger, and rises to complete its *Gloria in Excelsis*. "Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art Most High in the glory of God the Father!"

II. "And this shall be a sign unto you." While kneeling to-day before the cradle of Christianity, we may observe something of the predestined form both of Christian doctrine and Christian life. In the bud we trace the probable shape and colour of the coming flower. When standing at the source of a river we can determine at least the general direction of its course. In the Sacred Infancy, too, we may discern, without risk of indulgence in over-fanciful analogies, a typical portraiture of the

[d] St. John i. 14. [e] Ibid. 12–14.

Christian Creed, and a precious lesson for good Christian living. To the theologian and to the practical Christian, the sign of the manger and of the swaddling-clothes is at least as full of meaning now as it was of old to the shepherds of Bethlehem.

(*a.*) Look, then, at the Creed of the Church. Look at the historical form which the religion of our Saviour has from the first taken in the thought of man.

It has two sides, two aspects. It is one thing to sight, and another faith. To sight, it is wrapped in swaddling-clothes and laid in a manger. To faith, it is revealed from heaven as being supernatural and Divine. What is the Bible? To sight, it is "a book that may be read like any other book;" it is a vast, a beautiful, but a human literature; it is human in its sympathy, human also in its imperfections. To faith, it is throughout inspired and unerring; it is the very Voice of God speaking in human language to His listening children. What is the Church? To sight, a human polity; perhaps a mere creature or function of the State; a department of the Civil Service; a "theological fiction" which is upheld by the law. Sometimes the Church is described as being after all only a voluntary association; sometimes she passes for scarcely more than a literary club, designed to comprehend the wildest varieties of divergent speculation; sometimes men notice her as an antique product of highly organized opinion, that may be expected in time to pass away. But to faith, the Church is a Divine society, with a Divine organization; she is "the pillar and ground of Truth[f];" she is "the Body of Christ[g];" she is the "fulness of Him that filleth all in all[h]." What is the Crucifixion? To sight, it is a harrowing tragedy; it is the death of the most innocent of sufferers. It is at best a moral triumph, where it is seen to be something higher than a spectacle

[f] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [g] Col. i. 24. 1 Cor. vi. 15. [h] Ephes. i. 23.

of mere bodily agony. To faith, it is the pouring forth of the Atoning Blood before the Face of Heaven; it is the Oblation of a world-redeeming Sacrifice to the Eternal Father by His sinless Son. What are the Sacraments? To sight, here a drop of water, there a little bread and wine,—the honour paid to a holy memory,—an instructive symbol,—a touch of poetry. To faith, the sacramental signs are the instruments of a heavenly Gift, or the veils which but thinly shroud a heavenly and an awful Presence. To faith, the Sacraments are the revealed points of contact between the quickening Manhood of the Saviour and the race which He came to renew and to save. This contrast runs throughout revealed religion. Sight can see only the word, the symbol, the form, the material institution, the official representative of a human system. Faith detects, remembers, dwells on the spiritual effect, the thing really signified, the supernatural force, the heaven-sent authority. Sight lives in presence of the manger and of the swaddling-clothes; so does faith. But faith recalls, nay, she never forgets, she has always in her eye, the appearance of the Angels to the shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem.

Let us observe here how completely Christianity accepts, embodies, insists upon, postulates the principle of mystery. It is difficult indeed to understand how any real Revelation of God, as distinct from a mere human speculation about Him, could avoid doing so. But it is notoriously a common ground of objection to religion, that it "thrusts" mysteries on our acceptance. Yet do we avoid mystery so entirely in the realm of nature? Is there nothing in the natural world which recalls the scene in the manger at Bethlehem, as that scene is illumined by the doctrine of our Saviour's Godhead? What is mystery but a truth lurking behind some other truth which suggests yet shrouds it? What do we know of the law of con-

nexion between our bodies and our souls? That such a connexion exists, we are perfectly assured. But what are its conditions? Why does the nerve or the limb instinctively and uniformly express the will of the immaterial spirit which rules it? Again, what do we know of the analogous connexion between thought and language? Why should language have the prestige and power of conveying thought? What is the necessary connexion between variations in sounds produced in the atmosphere, and variations in thought, of which those varying sounds are nevertheless the perfectly representative expression? Does it not strike us as extraordinary that immaterial thought should thus perpetually pass by such a medium of conveyance from one human spirit to another? No; we are so familiar with the mystery, that we simply do not reflect on it. We do not observe, as we might observe, in the connexion between soul and body, or between thought and language, how God, present in nature, is ever educating His children to recognize His closer presence in the Kingdom of Grace. Man has lived so long in the temple of nature, he is so at home with its forms and colours, that he forgets its sacramental, its mysterious character. His science is provoked into activity by the dread solemnities, by the unfathomed mysteries around him. Yet the deeper he penetrates the more certainly is he encountered by solemnity and mystery; only as he advances, they meet him on a frontier more and more remote from his point of starting. He seems to be continually encroaching upon the province of mystery; and yet at each step mystery stands before him to dispute or to solemnize his progress; his most adventurous science is always pausing before the swaddling-clothes of a higher truth beyond her.

Even thus it is in Divine Revelation. God's "way is in the sea, and His paths in the great waters, and His

footsteps are not known[1]." All that is mysterious is not true; but the Highest Truth, the Truth of God's Being and Action revealed to the finite thought of man, is necessarily mysterious. It comes to us as we can bear it, shrouded beneath symbols and encased in formulæ. These are the swaddling-clothes of the Everlasting. If the inventor or the reformer of a religion should seek to win our sympathies by rashly offering to dispense with mystery, we might perhaps have reason to admire the hardihood or the ingenuity of his enterprise. But if we could in any degree trust the common sense of mankind, we should be sure that a religion of this description could not pretend to a heavenly origin. Its god would be nothing more than an intellectual image, forged and shaped in the workshop of a human brain. We might admire a work of art; we certainly should not suspect the presence of Deity. The true, living, Incomprehensible Creator is necessarily mysterious, even amid His largest and most condescending Revelations; and the created mind to which He discovers Himself knows full well, that this very note of mystery marks the mighty interval which separates His Infinity from its own finite self.

Remark also, as you kneel in the manger of Bethlehem, the unrivalled capacity of the Gospel for addressing itself alike to educated intellect and to the poor. The Gospel is at once a religion and a theology. One side of it is familiar, easy of comprehension to all, popular, concrete. But it has another side, in which it appears as a system of abstract truth, difficult of mastery even to practised and sanctified intellect. Here it has relations neither few nor unimportant with history, with language, with the physical sciences, with psychology, with metaphysics. It is itself the *scientia scientiarum*, the queen of sciences, the meeting-point of all the ways of thought, the ultimate arbiter of the

[1] Ps. lxxvii. 19.

many questions which move the mind of man. Thus it is digested into treatises; it creates entire literatures; it affords play and occupation for the most keen and earnest thinkers; it is nothing less than a vast intellectual power. Reason, imagination, the sense of truth and the sense of beauty, are all entertained by it. So urgent are its claims, so commanding is its attitude, that to regard it with neutral feelings is impossible. And when in other fields of knowledge investigations are being pursued with what might at first sight seem to be dispassionate impartiality, the investigator in reality keeps his eye steadily fixed upon the Christian theology; he measures the real value of his inquiries by their hostile or friendly bearing upon those formal assertions of doctrine for which the Church is responsible. Thus theology is a focus of intellectual activity: it is ever being attacked; it is ever enveloped in an atmosphere of conflict; it is continually adapting its terminology and its literature to the successive phases of human thought; it is always and jealously guarding the integrity of that Divine deposit which was committed to the Apostles[k]. Looked at on this side, it presents itself as the most comprehensive, as the absolute philosophy[l], which is designed to invite the interest and allegiance of the highest and most honest thought among the sons of men.

But the Gospel has another aspect. It is not merely proclaimed by the higher intelligences; it is wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger. The Gospel is something more than a philosophy; it is a religion. It is the religion of mankind; it is the religion of the uneducated and of the poor. To the poor it was especially preached by our Lord[m], and He drew attention to the fact as being one of significant value. The common people

[k] 1 Tim. vi. 20. Tit. i. 9. [l] 1 Cor. ii. 6.
[m] St. Matthew xi. 5.

heard him gladly [n]. His Apostles were uneducated men. His friends and worshippers were to be found in the Suburra long before they made their way into the senate, or into the palace of the Cæsars. And the people, the toiling and suffering people, the men who live by the sweat of their brow and by the rough labour of their hands, the people do in truth and reality find the Christ of Bethlehem in the Christ of Christian doctrine. The Gospel comes home to them; it comes home to their hearts and thoughts. It is presented to them wrapped in swaddling-clothes; it makes its appeal to their daily wants and to their deepest sympathies. It speaks in plain words of the sense of sin, of the atoning Blood, of the power of the Blessed Spirit, of the power of the Sacraments. It speaks of the presence, of the providence, of the love of Jesus. It brightens the present evil world, which presses sorely upon their spirits and their strength, by pointing to a world beyond the tomb, where the fondest imaginings of happiness are more than realized, and where the most cruel wrongs and woes are amply and for ever redressed. The Gospel is eminently the property of the people. In its popular exhibition it is dogmatic, without scientific accuracy; it is simple, without devising treason against the principle of dogma. It is wrapped in the swaddling-clothes of broken language; it is visibly expressed before the face of heaven through the medium of a worship and a ritual, which to the unreflecting might seem childish or unnecessary. It may perchance be held guilty of many offences against the laws of "good taste." Yet He, our Lord, is there, in the Divine simplicity of His wonderful Revelation. The same adorable Saviour is there in His manger; the Infinite Truth is lodging Himself, amid this easy language and these simple instructive forms, in the heart and intellect of the people. Often, too, He finds

[n] St. Mark xii. 37.

among the people a home and a welcome, when He is refused one by the fastidiousness, or by the false philosophy, or by the pretentious self-assertion of the higher classes. He is "laid in the manger because there is no room for Him in the inn[o]." Thus, as in the days of Tertullian, the simple children of the Church can solve the questions which confound the philosophers. This is not because poverty generally implies ignorance, while ignorance is docile and asks no questions. Nor is it because the Church has no message for educated intellect. The Church ere now has spoken to an Origen, to an Augustine, to an Aquinas, to a Hooker, to a Pascal, to a Butler, to a Newton. These great masters of human thought bend, like the multitudes around them, before the uplifted Cross. Certainly all religions that can be popularized are not therefore true. But no religion can pretend to be the religion of humanity, and yet be incapable of being so stated and exhibited, as to be understood by, and made welcome to the thought of the people. The Gospel is indeed the possession of no race, of no class. It is not a mere philosophy, which you cannot translate into the idiom of the many. Still less is it a popular legend, which will not bear the light of scientific analysis. It is the Voice of the Great Father of the human family, speaking to the whole company of His children. It comes to all, so that none should shrink from it; it is designed to unite all in a common faith and a common adoration. But it comes with provisions for the needs of the many, as well as for the needs of the few. It is concrete and external, no less than spiritual and abstract. The Truth which comes from Heaven is wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger; and to thoughtful minds its seeming humiliation is the very sign of its Divinity.

[o] St. Luke ii. 7.

(β.) We pass to consider the moral import of the manger-bed of the Infant Jesus.

By the allusions at the beginning of the second and third chapters of his Gospel, St. Luke, alone among the Evangelists, connects our thoughts of the Birth of the Redeemer with the contemporary history of the Roman world. The names of Augustus and Tiberius Cæsar almost jar upon the ear, while the soul is lingering around the precincts of the Holy Home at Bethlehem. And yet the *moral* contrast which those names suggest is healthful and bracing. It brings before us with singular clearness the moral revolution which was to follow upon the Incarnation. It brings before us the great World-empire at the height of its fortunes, yet sensible of a profound want, and secretly apprehensive of an approaching change. Could Rome, we ask, the mistress of the nations, yet lack any thing in that her age of glory? What was needed that she should complete her triumph, or enhance her self-content? Not wealth: her coffers had been enriched with the spoils of a conquered world. Not literature: many of those great writers whom we study as models of taste and method were yet living or scarcely in their graves. Not art: she had become through her victories the central museum of a vast empire and of realms beyond it. Her streets and her palaces were beautified by the accumulated products of their skill. Not large outlays of capital on public works. Our own great advance in material civilization has only taught us to look with increased respect upon the aqueducts, the roads, the triumphal arches, the palaces, the vast and varied constructive efforts, which, even in their ruins, at this very hour, remind civilized Europe of the genius and energy of the Roman. Nor did Rome need new and wiser legislation. Already that vast system of law was taking shape, the later codifications of which are still preserved to us, and are admiringly quoted by our

modern jurists as a splendid monument of administrative genius. Nor did the people live uncared-for by those who possessed wealth and power. Modern life presents no parallel to those costly but cruel and wasteful entertainments which for a day enabled the population of a vast metropolis to share the riches, while they flattered the ambition, of their rulers[p]. The Rome of the early Cæsars, the Rome of the age of the Incarnation, the Rome which ruled and which represented the fairest portion of the inhabited world, gave numerous signs of mental and material progress. She was wealthy. She was refined. She was the home of the fine arts, the home of literature, the mart of commerce. She was the minister and mistress of luxury and of enjoyment. She was the seat of empire. But she craved for a something which as yet she possessed not. She had lost public liberty, because she had parted with private virtue. Roman society was in reality a living commentary upon the words of St. John, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father[q]."

The principle known in treatises of formal theology as "concupiscence," and to popular language as active selfishness, was every where dominant. It was embodied in the whole social and political fabric of the Empire: it was thus the real prostitute of the Apocalyptic vision[r];—she who made the nations drunk with her deadly draught. It was displayed in its triple form of unrestricted sensuality, unchecked covetousness, and unbounded self-assertion. As sensuality, it was preying upon the strength and manhood of the people. As covetousness, it was drying up the wealth of provinces and the

[p] See the vivid and withal painful description of Döllinger, Heid. and Jud. viii. 2, 5.

[q] 1 St. John ii. 16.

[r] Rev. xvii. 2, 5, 15; xviii. 3, 7.

sources of enterprise. As pride, it was every where in active conflict with personal and social liberty. But these effects, outward and political, were harmless compared with the degradation inflicted by unchecked self-worship upon the human soul within. When man is his own centre, his own ideal, his own end, his own God; when the indulgence of passion, and the acquisition of income, and general self-assertion are leading and uncontrolled principles of action; the human character sinks to a point of degradation which language can shadow out, but which it cannot describe. The Roman Christians must have recognized the society around them, the men and women with whom they had daily dealings as fellow-citizens, in the dark and terrible touches of that first chapter[s] of the Epistle addressed to themselves by the Apostle of the Gentiles. But St. Paul's indictment against the pagan life and manners is supported, nay, it is outdone, by the testimony of observant pagans like Juvenal, who laugh bitterly at the moral ruin of the time, but who know not the secret nor the cure of the disease. If that disease could have been cured by a natural morality, higher in some respects than man had ever known before, it might have been cured by the later Stoicism, expounded by writers like Seneca and Epictetus, and illustrated in practice by a rare example of philosophical integrity on the throne of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. But the Stoic philosophy was selfish at bottom, and unequal to dealing with the whole area of human nature[t]. It was, as far as it went, a beautiful theory. But its designers never supposed that it could be put into practice, except by a few educated persons under very favourable circumstances It had as little effect upon the masses of mankind, as have the midnight speculations of an astronomer who is pacing the roof of his observatory upon the thought and

[s] Rom. i. 28-31. Cf. Döllinger, Heid. und Jud. ix. ii. 2. [t] Felix.

habits of the sleeping cottagers around him. The world-wide principle of spiritual death needed to be expelled by a stronger and not less universal principle. It demanded a regenerating force, resting not on theory but on fact, a principle human in its form and action, but Divine in its strength and origin[u].

Such a principle we find in the Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in the manger of Bethlehem. This was indeed the λόγος ἔμφυτος, the Divine Word, engrafted on human nature, and able to save the souls of men[x]. The Incarnation was the source of a moral revolution. It was the uplifting of the standard of moral reform. By saving man, it was destined to save human society. The Incarnation confronted sensuality by endurance and mortification. It confronted covetousness by putting honour upon poverty. It taught men that a man's highest life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. But its great lesson was a lesson of humility. In the humiliation of the Highest the nations read the truth which the Incarnate Lord taught in words:—"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven[y]."

Do we sometimes languidly wish that we could attain to more strength of Christian faith, and to more growth in the Christian life? May it not be, brethren, that we need to learn more fully the great lesson of Christmas Day? This shall be a sign unto us: we shall find the Divine Babe, wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger. Perhaps we dwell with complacency on our real or presumed good qualities, on our gifts of nature, even on our gifts of grace. Perhaps we talk easily and naturally of ourselves, of that which reflects credit on us,

[u] Döllinger, Heid. und Jud. viii. i. 1.

[x] St. James i. 21.

[y] St. Matthew xviii. 3.

of that which leads others to think or to talk of us. We contrast ourselves with others. We contrast our presumed virtues or talents with their presumed incapacities or faults. We find ourselves making a scientific study of the shortcomings of other persons. We are secretly pained when they are praised. We delicately suggest something which detracts from their credit. We have always a defence at hand when we are ourselves found fault with: it is a point of honour with us to hold our own, and to refuse to admit that we are in the wrong. We assume an air of quiet superiority in conversation; we cultivate a judicious and elegant contempt for the opinions of the great bulk of mankind. We are quite sure that we see much farther and enjoy a much wider intellectual horizon than is possible for others. We think much of what is public and striking; we are fascinated by great names, great employments, great promotions, great successes, great alliances. It does not even occur to us that mere human greatness is for a Christian a thing to fear, or a thing to pity. We are despondent at the failure of our plans or our efforts; as though we had a divine right to succeed, and were wronged by Providence when baulked of success. We are angry at finding that we are thought meanly of, and we endeavour to force ourselves to form an equally low estimate of those who, as we hear, criticize us unfavourably. We do our works to be seen of men, or at least so as not to escape being seen of them. We prefer extraordinary tasks to common-place and every-day duties. We have no taste for a life of secret prayer and unpublished benevolence. We shrink from labour which no eye but the Eye of God surveys. Our good taste probably leads us to avoid gross acts of self-assertion or vanity. Or rather our selfish instinct assures us that self-assertion carried beyond a certain point is apt, in a fastidious society, to defeat itself, and to provoke

unpleasant reprisals. And yet is it not only too possible to display before men that species of mechanical modesty which is the poorest counterfeit of real humility, while yet in our inner souls we breathe an atmosphere which is in its principle the very spirit of the fallen archangel?

And if this, or something like this, be the case with us, how little do we as yet know of the moral import of the Incarnation! How little are we apprised of the truth, that God has poured the condemnation and the contempt of Heaven upon all forms of creaturely self-assertion, by lowering Himself in the freedom of His omnipotence to the level of a creature's life!

Be well assured that for us men humility is the law of progress, because it is the admission of truth. It is no fictitious posture or state of mind; it is the seeing ourselves as we are. We only desire improvement when we dare to confess our imperfection; and the All-perfect has deigned to teach us the lesson. Even the life of Jesus begins with the manger. "Magnus esse vis, a minimo incipe[z]." Begin with confession. Confess error, confess ignorance, confess sin. You wish to learn a language. Acknowledge to yourself the extent of your ignorance of its grammar. You desire to attain proficiency in an art. Crush that rising ambition to produce striking effects with ease and rapidity, and see what you know of the laws of beauty. You aspire to reform society. Study society on a small scale, in one of the units which compose it. Begin, for instance, by reforming yourself. You fancy that you have peculiar aptitudes for government and command. Look at the theory of government from below, and measure your power of rule by your power of obedience. You would fain save your soul. Nay, you would be a saint. Well. It is a blessed

[z] St. Aug. Serm. lxix. 2 (vol. v.). Compare "Ad magna nos tendimus: parva capiamus, et magni erimus." Ib. Serm. cxvii. 17.

ambition. But humility is the condition of improvement. You must begin by confessing yourself to be a sinner.

It is here indeed, in the spiritual sphere, that the lesson of Christmas Day receives its widest and highest application. What is most necessary to faith, but a confession of the limits and of the weakness of human intellect? What is most necessary to sanctification through the means of grace, but an honest admission of the worthlessness and poverty of the efforts of unassisted nature? What is most necessary to acceptance with a holy God, but an abandonment of the plea of self-righteousness and the submission of self to the Redemptive Righteousness of Christ? What is needed for the heartfelt reception of Truth which comes to us in humble language and in familiar institutions, but the great lesson which He teaches on Christmas Day, Who is Himself the Author and the Substance of that truth—the lesson of humility?

III. Christmas, if not the first, is, in England at least, the most welcome festival of the Church. We English are a domestic people. And Christmas sheds the blessing of the Son of the Highest on every household in the land. It strengthens those family ties, which at once protect individual purity, and are the sinews of a Christian civilization. Every believing mother knows the blessing of that awful Child-bearing[a] which the Apostle proclaims as the salvation of womankind. Even a mother's love for her child,—of all natural human affections the purest and the most unselfish,—is ennobled by the love of Mary. And every well-instructed Christian child feels an interest in and a fellowship with the Childhood of Jesus. The weakness and dependence of life's earliest years are dignified

[a] 1 Tim. ii. 15: *Σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας.* Cf. Hammond in loc. Compare especially Bishop Ellicott's exhaustive note, "Pastoral Epistles," in loc.

by the story of Bethlehem. From that manger where adoring love tends the weakness of Omnipotence, there streams a ray of sunlight which in the depths of our Northern winter warms, and lightens, and cheers every family that names the Name of Christ. Christmas is one of those few festivals on which those who are severed from the Church share something—we may trust much—of her joy. It is a day on which even the unthinking, and the indifferent, and the prayerless feel an unwonted glow, they know not whence or why, which steals over their being with the power and mysteriousness of a higher world. To-day there is union between Truth and Mercy [b] as they meet in our Incarnate Lord. To-day there is union between the purest of earthly affections and the highest sympathies of the inhabitants of heaven. To-day a common chord is touched, *here* by the family greeting, *there* by the songs around the Throne. Those who are separated by differences of race, by differences of class, by differences of political opinion; those who are ranged as foes in deadly strife on this side or on that, in the fevered agony of a dismembered republic [c]; those who stand on opposite sides of a chasm which forbids, alas! the visible intercommunion with each other of the severed branches of the Church of Jesus Christ,—meet to-day around His manger, to receive His message of peace among men, and to rise above earthly troubles and earthly separations, while engaged in a common effort of praise and adoration. Even those to whom the Christ of Christendom is but a dim tradition of the past, vanishing, as it would seem, before the material progress of the present, to-day feel something in common with Christians, who indeed know and love the Lord That bought them.

[b] Ps. lxxxv. 10.

[c] This sermon was preached during the earlier period of the civil war in the United States of America.

For coming to us in this intimate union with our common humanity; coming to us with this direct recognition of our home affections; coming to us in a doctrinal tradition of eighteen centuries which has lost nothing of its strength, nothing of its intense and most practical significance; coming to us in the pages of His Evangelists and in the realities of His Sacraments; coming to us in the marvellousness of His love and in the depths of His humiliations; wrapped as He is in His swaddling-clothes and laid in His manger, Jesus Christ takes us all captive, at least for the moment, by the beauty, the poetry, the largeness of His generosity, if not by the sense of our own utter need of Him and of the mighty strength of His salvation. May He of His mercy raise our earthly cheerfulness into heavenly joy, and deepen the welcome rest from daily toil on this day of feasting into the abiding peace which passeth all human understanding! May we see more and more of His living Majesty beneath the words and the forms which shroud Him while they speak of Him! At His manger may we learn the blessed temper which makes faith, repentance, perseverance, easy, and to which are promised the crowns of glory worn by the blessed around His throne!

SERMON IX.

THE DIVINE VICTIM.

GAL. ii. 20.

The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

DOES the solemn remonstrance, which the Apostle of the Gentiles has just described himself as having addressed to St. Peter at Antioch, continue; while the discussion is thrown into a more argumentative and impersonal form, down to the end of this remarkable chapter? Or does the narrative portion of the Epistle to the Galatians end with the upbraiding question, "Why compellest thou the Gentiles to Judaize[a]?" Is St. Paul in the text still remonstrating with St. Peter? Is he justifying his remonstrance by an explanation which was only needed by and addressed to the Galatian Churches? Or must the point be left undecided, on the ground that here as elsewhere the Apostle is careful only for truth, and regardless of method and form in stating it? Does the historical statement before us melt away into the doctrinal argument which follows it by a transition, so gradual, so well-nigh imperceptible, that we cannot say to which of the two the text most properly belongs?

These are questions of serious interest to the student

[a] Gal. ii. 14.

of this portion of the Sacred Writings. Yet they may be fitly set aside on so solemn an occasion as the present. However we may answer them, they do not affect the general import of the words, to which our thoughts this morning will be more especially directed. And mere gratuitous criticism is out of place during these solemn hours, when the Church is kneeling beneath the Cross to honour the Dying Agony of the Redeemer of the world.

It is sufficiently plain that the great Apostle will not consent to fall back upon a dispensation which had indeed of old come from heaven; but which, like a star that had paled before the rising sun, had already been set aside upon the promulgation of the Gospel. The Jewish law itself convinced St. Paul of its intrinsic insufficiency to meet the needs of the human soul [b]. Although "a Jew by nature and not a sinner of the Gentiles," St. Paul looked only to be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law [c]. To suppose that the whole Jewish law was of literal, eternal, universal obligation, was in effect to make the Divine Master Himself, Who had died to free mankind from its bondage and from the guilt of transgressing it, a very "minister of sin [d]." If the Judaizing Galatians were right, the Crucifixion had been needless as a fount of strength and pardon; and the legal ordinances were not less effective as channels of grace than were the Sacraments of the Gospel. If the Judaizers were right, the Apostle had only to confess that his Christian energy had been the measure of his mistake, and, like a blundering workman, to build again the things which he had destroyed [e]. If righteousness indeed came by the law, then Christ had died in vain [f].

If, on the other hand, the Apostle might trust his own spiritual life and experience, the case was far otherwise

[b] Gal. ii. 19. [c] Ibid. 15, 16. [d] Ibid. 17.
[e] Ibid. 18. [f] Ibid. 21.

St. Paul's whole soul was sustained, quickened, empowered, supernaturalized, by that mighty Event wherein the law received its explanation as a typical system, and whereby its ceremonial prescriptions had lost their force. The Son of God had died upon the Cross for the sins of every separate child of Adam. This was that blessed grace of God, of which the Apostle was so profoundly sensible, and which he would not knowingly frustrate[g]. "I am crucified," he cries, "with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

"The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." What Person, what act is present to the mind of the Apostle when he thus expresses himself? what idea do his words convey to his Galatian readers?

I. First of all, remark that the Apostle, even when speaking of "the Son of God," has his eye upon One Who is not other than truly and literally Human. Nor would St. Paul's readers have failed in this to follow him. The disposition to explain away the reality of our Saviour's Manhood belongs to the later Apostolical age. It had not arisen when St. Paul wrote this Epistle. Docetism had no affinities with the Judaizing tendencies which were corrupting the Galatian Churches. On the contrary, the Judaizers tended to become Humanitarian and Ebionitic[h]. Their high estimate of the legal ordinances depreciated the finished work of Jesus Christ. Their depreciation of the redemptive work of Christ involved as a theological consequence the further tendency to depreciate His Divine Person. And it has been

[g] Gal. ii. 21.

[h] Compare Newman's "Arians of the Fourth Century," ch. i. sect. i. pp. 21, 22.

suggested[i], that the heretical line of thought of which Arianism was subsequently the most considerable, if not the culminating expression, is only traced back to its original source, when we detect it as a principle more or less vigorous, albeit latent and unrecognized, in the Judaizing doctrines which confronted St. Paul among his Galatian converts.

This side of the truth then—our Lord's real Humanity—the Galatians would have apprehended without difficulty. Certainly the reality of our Lord's Manhood is most prominently asserted in the later Epistles, whether as the ground of His Priesthood, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, or, more generally, as the instrument of His Mediatorial Work, as in that to Timothy, or as essential to the reality of the Incarnation, as in St. John's First Epistle. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He likewise Himself took part in the same[k]." "In the days of His Flesh He offered strong crying and tears to heaven[l]." "He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in all points tempted like as we are[m]." "The One Mediator between God and man" is "the Man Christ Jesus[n]." "The spirit of Antichrist" it is which "denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh[o]."

Jesus, then, is a self-sacrificing, suffering Member of our common race? He does not belong simply and altogether to another world, so that we men feel that we have little or no part in Him. He has human Blood in His Veins. He has, let us reverently remember it, a human Countenance. He has taken upon Him not merely a human Body, but a human Soul. His Soul is human in Its endowments of reason, memory, affection,

[i] Newman's "Arians," pp. 25, 26.
[k] Heb. ii. 14.
[l] Heb. v. 7.
[m] Heb. iv. 15.
[n] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[o] 1 St. John iv. 3.

imagination, will. He has pre-eminently and manifestly human sympathies. He is born indeed supernaturally of a Virgin Mother. He is her only Son[p]. He is brought up (with what surpassing care and tenderness who shall say?) in a home where poverty had but refined the finest movements of human affection. And besides His Blessed Mother, He has other relatives. There are His honoured foster-father, and His mother's sisters, and His cousins. There is, moreover, the little company of friends whom He chooses from among other men, and presses most closely to His human Heart. When, then, He hangs upon His Cross in the anguish and in the shame of death, we are not contemplating the strictly unintelligible woe of a Being Who belongs only to a distant world. He appeals directly and powerfully to the fellow-feeling of our common nature. He appeals to its tenderness, to its experimental knowledge of suffering, to its purest, to its most unselfish compassion. He is not (at least, historically speaking), as art has sometimes represented Him, a solitary Form, alone visible in the encompassing darkness, hanging in awful desolation between earth and heaven. Thus lonely indeed in His death-agony He may well appear to the soul which gazes on Him, as its One Hope and Refuge; and which, gazing on Him, would fain forget all beside. But in the pages of the Gospel it is otherwise. In the Gospel narrative the race to which He belongs, and for which He is dying, crowds around Him; and His Ear and His Eye are filled in death with sickening evidences of the fickleness, and the unthank-

[p] Cf. "Pearson on the Creed," i. 211. "Being at once the mother of the Son of God and yet a virgin, she continued for ever in the same virginity, according to the tradition of the Fathers and the constant doctrine of the Church." Compare Dr. Mill, Chr. Adv. Publication for 1843, p. 310, sqq. (Myth. Int., ed. Webb, p. 265. sqq.); "Jackson on the Creed," xii. p. 97.

fulness, and the scorn, and the hate of His fellow-men. Close beneath His Cross there is a friend who represents His human friendships; since he has enjoyed more intimately than any other the unspeakable privilege of His companionship. And one besides is at hand, to whom His Agony is a sorrow, such as we may not fathom. His Mother is there. She has struggled through the crowd of His enemies, that she may meet His dying gaze and hear His last cry. But in her awful, soul-absorbing grief, beneath the Cross of her Son, Mary witnesses to His true Manhood. Her maternal woe attests her Son's real share in our common nature; and those who have watched the last struggles of a friend or of a relative, more precious and loved than any else on earth, can understand how sublimely human was that last recognition, that tender commendation on Mount Calvary—"Behold thy son!" "Behold thy mother[q]!"

Wherever human feeling is yet fresh and keen, wherever it has not been blunted or brutalized; the death of a fellow-man raises in us men a profound and painful fellow-feeling. But if the life which is yielded be yielded neither in early youth nor in advanced years; if already each natural power has been perfectly developed, and as yet time has left upon the victim no trace of an incipient decay; our sympathies with him are strangely intensified. It is truer perhaps to say that they acquire nothing less than a new character. For to represent the most finished and highest capacities of our common race is in some sense to impersonate it. The man who sacrifices the strongest, noblest life of which humanity is capable, must die, as it seems to us, with terrible effort. He must struggle in death against the highest energies of life. A child has hardly yet learnt to live. An old man may feel that his

[q] St. John xix. 26, 27.

time for dying has fairly come; and that, like ripe fruit which is ready to fall, he may almost rejoice to be laid in his grave by the hand of violence, since its stroke is wellnigh in harmony with the course of nature. But our Holy Lord suffered, in the prime of manhood, at the age of thirty-three. He offered the "Body which was prepared[r]," just when that Body had completely developed Its highest energies, perfections, beauties. Scripture nowhere hints that His vital powers had been ever impaired or weakened by disease: so that when He died upon the Cross, the keenest, strongest life of which human nature is capable was wrung out of Him by a protracted torture.

Let us however steadily contemplate a Sufferer Who is innocent of all crime, innocent not merely in act but in motive. Let Him be "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners[s]," in His outward conversation, and yet more in the inmost sanctuary of His Soul and Conscience. Let Him have challenged His enemies to "convince Him of sin[t]," in the confidence that their suspicious jealousy could not sully His spotless innocence. Then His death provokes in us a still deeper sentiment. We do not now sympathize as human beings, only with the physical sufferings of a fellow-man. We do not even endeavour to enter chiefly into His mental anguish. The appeal of such a death-scene is pre-eminently moral. It sensibly rebukes us. We feel the feebleness, the cowardice, the aimlessness of our own daily life in such a Presence. For a moment perhaps the tragedy provokes our indignation against the injustice which enacts it; but it certainly and permanently commands the tribute of our reverence and of our love. Those who have seen on Calvary, as we must fear, little else, have seen thus much in the Death of Jesus Christ: for them it is the closing scene of a moral victory. They dwell with chastened enthusiasm upon "that perfect harmony of

[r] Heb. x. 5. [s] Heb. vii. 26. [t] St. John viii. 46.

nature, that absolute self-renunciation, that pure love, that entire resignation, continued through life, and ending in death," as "facts independent of their feelings[u]." They rest with grateful hearts on this spectacle of spiritual grandeur. And, indeed, for most men to have reached middle life is to have waded through years of greater or less unfaithfulness to the law and light of God. Accordingly, in ordinary cases, our sympathy with the suffering of grown-up persons is diminished by our conviction, whether consciously avowed to ourselves or not, that such suffering has been deserved. Thus the instinct of pity within us is held in check by the sense of justice; and we realize an extreme form of this result, in hearing of a public execution, when there has been no doubt whatever of the guilt of the condemned criminal. But how could we endure the narrative, still more the spectacle of prolonged insult and torture inflicted upon a saintly and revered friend, or, as in the recent Indian mutiny, upon young children, or even upon a dumb, helpless, harmless animal? Yet His very executioners rendered homage to the stainless holiness of our Crucified Lord. And when prophecy speaks of His being brought as a lamb to the slaughter[x], and when He is described as the Holy *Child*[y] Jesus, Scripture appears to evoke and to cherish within us this species of intense, tender, bewildered sympathy, as proper to the contemplation of the Suffering Death of our Most Holy Saviour.

But let us suppose further that the suffering be voluntary, that it be accepted for the good of a friend, of a cause, of a country, when it might be declined in strict

[u] Professor Jowett, Epistles of St. Paul, ii. p. 481.

[x] Isa. liii. 7. Acts viii. 32.

[y] Acts iv. 27, 30. Even if παῖς alludes chiefly to the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah liii. 11, it may be also designed to suggest the fact that favourite slaves were frequently boys.

reason and justice. Then the sympathetic reverence with which we regard it is heightened by the homage which we pay to its disinterestedness, to its generosity, to its direct claims upon ourselves. And when suffering is undergone for the sake and in the sacred name of Truth, whether the Highest Truth or the lowest, whether moral or speculative, whether natural or revealed; the human heart, sometimes even in its deepest corruption, bursts forth into a very ecstasy of wondering and thankful love. Socrates, we know, has still his meed of this enduring homage; even though when dying he could prescribe the sacrifice of a cock to Æsculapius[z]. And the name and memory, nay, the very tomb of the Christian martyr has commanded for ages a tribute of sincere reverence. This debt of reverence Christendom really pays to the sufferings and blood, whereby Europe was won to Christianity. For it is felt that every man who witnesses to truth by dying for it, gives himself, in a certain true sense, for the human race. He proclaims the value and nobleness of our moral life, and the relative cheapness of our animal existence. He enlarges the horizon of our moral prospect. He enriches our wills with a new and powerful motive. He endows us with the force of his own example. He teaches us the great lesson that no real good, political, social, or moral, was ever achieved except at the cost of sacrifice. He asserts the transcendent preciousness of that which is man's best conquest or his best inheritance; he preaches in act and deed the preciousness of truth. And our human Lord claimed for Himself a chief share in the sentiment with which mankind salutes the Martyr, when standing before His judges He exclaimed, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth[a]."

Thus it was that He gave Himself, His true, His repre-

[z] Plat. Phædo, p. 118 a, ch. 66.

[a] St. John xviii. 37.

sentative Human Life, the very prime and strength of His manhood, His undefiled Body and His stainless Soul, to death. He was free. He might have declined to make the sacrifice. "No man," He said, "taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself[b]." But He gave all that man holds dear. He surrendered His home, His friends, His fair name among men, His credit with and sway over the multitude. He gave the energies, the powers, the organs and members of His Body, the faculties and endowments of His Human Soul, without reserve or stint. He embraced His destined Agony with deliberation, nay with fervour. He laid Himself out for acute mental suffering, and for prolonged bodily torture. He hastened through the brief years of His Ministry with His gaze keenly, constantly fixed on that which awaited Him. He hastened onwards to Gethsemane and to Calvary. In each of the Gospels the condensed narrative expands, as we approach the Passion, into a fulness of detail and statement, in order that we men may study the generosity, the greatness, the completeness of this Gift of gifts. The Prime and Flower of humankind, He gave Himself as a witness to the high capacities of our nature, and to the pre-eminent sacredness of truth. We are men; and we may say, each of us, in this human sense, with the Apostle, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

II. Such is the Passion, if the Sufferer be supposed to be only human. Such indeed is its aspect, if, knowing Him to be more than Man, we fix the soul's eye for the moment only upon His holy Humanity. But the Apostle's general language throughout this passage becomes unintelligible if we suppose Jesus Christ to be only Man. And when St. Paul speaks of *the Son of God*, (whatever may have been urged by Socinian expositors

[b] St. John x. 18.

to the contrary[c],) he opens upon the soul a new and altogether distinct aspect of the Event of this day.

[c] The admissions contained in the following passage are remarkable. The theory that the earliest Jewish Christians first learnt to estimate aright the dignity of our Lord's Person from reflecting on His work, is, of course, an error:—

"Plus la communauté se pénétrait de la grandeur de l'œuvre de la rédemption, et plus elle comprenait que le Messie ne devait pas seulement paraître dans l'avenir pour clorre l'histoire du monde, mais qu'il était déjà venu l'asseoir sur une nouvelle base, en régénérant l'humanité, plus aussi sa personne lui apparaissait grande et sublime. Elle finit par se convaincre que les anciennes révélations ne lui donnaient pas la mesure de la nouvelle, que le Seigneur et chef de l'Eglise n'était pas simplement le successeur des prophètes, que *le nom de Fils de Dieu lui appartenait dans un autre sens* qu'à ceux qui l'avaient porté précédemment. Pour constater ce progrès par des citations, nous n'avons pas besoin d'intervertir l'ordre adopté dans cet ouvrage et d'en appeler aux apôtres dont les écrits ont plus particulièrement servi de base à la théologie ecclésiastique, Paul, Jean et l'auteur de l'épître aux Hébreux. Leur enseignement sera l'objet d'une étude spéciale dans les livres suivants. Nous ferons observer seulement que les écrits de Paul, qui remontent, pour ainsi dire, jusqu'au berceau de l'Église, ne contiennent *aucune trace que leur doctrine christologique, si différente de celle de l'ébionitisme vulgaire, ait paru être une innovation, ou ait donné lieu à des contestations quelconques, à l'époque où ils furent publiés.*"—*Reuss, Théol. Chrét.* i. pp. 459, 460.

The author then condenses into a striking paragraph the evidence which the Apocalyse of St. John (he calls it "livre foncièrement judéo-chrétien") yields to the fact that our Lord's Deity was taught in all its fulness in those portions of the Apostolic Church where, according to some recent theories, Ebionitic influences might have been expected to be felt:—

"On doit reconnaître sans hésiter que Christ, dans l'Apocalypse est élevé au niveau de Dieu. Il est nommé le premier et le dernier, le commencement et la fin, et ces mêmes formules sont employées à désigner l'Etre suprême. Si la théologie est arrivée, par l'analyse spéculative, à reconnaître, dans l'essence de Dieu, sept attributs ou perfections, il est dit expressément que ces mêmes attributs appartiennent aussi à Christ. Lui seul peut nommer Dieu son père, qui, dans ce livre, n'est jamais appelé notre père, ce qui prouve à la fois la distance qui le sépare de nous et son affinité avec le Père. Il porte un nom nouveau, qui sera écrit aussi sur le front des fidèles, mais ce nom, c'est en même temps celui du Père, le nom de Jéhovah, nom mystérieux aujourd'hui, mais que ceux qui doivent le porter apprendront à prononcer de celui qui en possède le secret. Enfin, il est appelé la Parole de Dieu; il est donc cette hypostase primitive, Verbe, Esprit ou Sagesse, qui comme la reconnaissait déjà la philosophie antérieure, avait été créée avant

"The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Not to linger over the Scripture language, which speaks of the Blood of God as the purchase-price of His Church [d], and of the Crucifixion of the Lord of Glory by His creatures [e], let us carry our thoughts to the doctrine of our Lord's Person with which St. John prefaces his Gospel, or to the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Son of God, Who is described in the Epistle to the Hebrews as being sent "in these last days [f]," is in St. John the Divine Word or uttered Reason, Who was "in the beginning with God," and Who "was God [g]." In these two names, the Son and the Word, we may study in its completeness the glory which our Divine Saviour "had with" the Father "before the world was [h]." As the Son, He is personally distinct from the Everlasting Father. As the Word or Reason of God, He is the Father's Equal, the Sharer of His inmost counsels, the Partaker of His Substance and of His Intellectual Life. If He had been revealed only as the Son, the unbalanced phrase might have tempted us to Arianism. If only as the Word, we might have been attracted by the plausible heresy of Sabellius. In their combination, the two words teach and guard the Catholic doctrine, that the Eternal Son is of One Substance with, yet personally distinct from, the Eternal Father. When, then we say of Jesus Christ, "He gave Himself for me," we are not speaking of a divinized man, whose moral

le monde, afin qu'elle appelât à son tour ce dernier à l'existence et l'ornât de tous les trésors de sa perfection. C'est ce qui est exprimé en toutes lettres par la phrase qui nomme Christ le commencement de la création de Dieu."—*Ibid.* pp. 461, 462. Compare Pressensé, "Jésus Christ," p. 242.

[d] Acts xx. 28. See Dr. Wordsworth's valuable note in loc. Scrivener, "Introduction to Criticism of the New Testament," p. 445, pronounces for the reading Θεοῦ.

[e] 1 Cor. ii. 8. [f] Heb. i. 2. [g] St. John i. 1. [h] Ibid. xvii. 5.

stature seemed to his contemporaries to reach from earth to Heaven. Nor are we face to face with a Being, created in ages long prior to the creation of the worlds, whose mysterious origin is hidden deep in the depths of God's eternity, yet of Whom we may say without inaccuracy, that "there was a time when He was not." For this our Saviour, Who was judged and crucified as on this day, is "the Son Which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, Very and Eternal God[i]." He is "the Only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God[k]." His oneness with the Father, of Whom He was begotten before all worlds, is imaged by the connexion of the ray of light with its parent sun, from which, to the eye of sense, it seems to stream down to earth in unbroken continuity—*ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης*. And just as the impression of a seal is co-extensive with, yet distinct from, the seal which produces it, so is the Son at once equal with, yet hypostatically distinct from, the Person of the Everlasting Father, Whose Image and Impress He is—*χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως*[l].

It is observable how both Scripture and the Catholic Creeds first state the truth of Christ's Divine and Eternal Person, and then pass on to say how He suffered and died. The Godhead indeed could not suffer. But God could take a nature which is capable of suffering. And we know that He has condescended to do so. But Scripture and the Creeds do not pause to limit or explain the sense in which the Eternal and Almighty Son of God

[i] Art. II. [k] Nicene Creed.

[l] Heb. i. 3. So St. Greg. Nyssen., Comm. in loc.: *Τῷ μὲν ἀπαυγάσματι τὸ συμφυὲς ἐνδεικνύμενος· τῷ δὲ χαρακτῆρι τὸ ἰσοστάσιον. οὔτε γὰρ αὐτῆς πρὸς τὴν ἀπαυγάζουσαν φύσιν ἐπινοεῖταί τι μέσον· οὔτε τις τοῦ χαρακτῆρος ἐλάττωσις πρὸς τὴν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ χαρακτηριζομένην ὑπόστασιν. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ τὴν ἀπαυγάζουσαν φύσιν νοήσας, καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα ταύτης πάντως κατενόησε. καὶ τὸ μέγεθος τῆς ὑποστάσεως· ἐν νῷ λαβὼν, τῷ ἐπιφαινομένῳ χαρακτῆρι πάντως ἐμμετρεῖ τὴν ὑπόστασιν.*

became obedient to death. Still less do the Creeds insert a new subject[m]: as though He Who was Very God was other than He Who was crucified. St. John describes the great Subject of his Gospel in its opening chapter. He is the Word, Who is with God, and Who is God[n]. He is the Author of creation[o], the source of Life and Light[p]. St. John then traces His manifestation in the flesh through its successive stages, His miracles, His disputes with the Jews, His journeyings to Jerusalem. When at the end of his Gospel, in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters, St. John describes Christ's humiliations, and Sufferings, and Death, he is speaking of the Self-same Person Whom he had already described at first as the Everlasting Reason or Word of the Supreme God. In the same way the Creed asserts that "Very God of Very God, for us men and for our salvation . . . was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate[q]." And St. Paul tells the Philippians, how Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, did not deem His equality with God a prize to be jealously retained or insisted on[r], but emptied Himself[s] of His glory, by taking upon Him the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men. And further, how, after being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient even to death; but that death—the Cross[t]. We follow the descent from the Throne of Glory to the human life, and from the human life to the exceptional pain and ignominy of the Cross. But the Person is throughout the Same. Thus Scripture and the Creeds lead us to view the Atonement in the light of the Incarnation,

[m] This was pressed by St. Cyril and the Alexandrian Synod upon the attention of the unhappy Nestorius. Cf. Routh, Scrip. Eccles. Opusc., vol. ii. pp. 37, 38.

[n] St. John i. 1. [o] Ibid. 3. [p] Ibid. 4. [q] Nicene Creed.

[r] Οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

[s] Ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε. [t] Phil. ii. 6–8.

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rather than to value the Incarnation only or chiefly as a basis and justification of those effects which are attributed to the Atonement. If it might be said without irreverence, the Catholic doctrine thus teaches us to approach the Cross from above more naturally than from below. We look at the Crucifixion in the light of the dignity of our Saviour's Person, without thinking exclusively of the needs of our sinful souls. Some of the earlier Socinians would seem to illustrate this position, however unconsciously. Their errors on the subject of our Lord's Death are a direct consequence of their Humanitarianism. They do not, generally speaking, concern themselves to engage in distinct speculations as to any presumed incompatibility between the revealed results of the great Sacrifice and the eternal Love or Justice of God.

If, prior to information on the subject, we were to be told that such a being as our Incarnate Lord was to teach and act on the scene of human life; we should anticipate works of marvel and mystery, and words of unearthly wisdom and of infallible truth. But if we were to be told that He was to die, we should be unable to form any specific conjecture as to the possible or probable results of His death. When dealing with a problem so mysterious, so altogether transcending the range of our limited capacities, the human mind can only wait for Divine disclosures[u]. It cannot venture to forecast them. It may indeed reverently and reasonably surmise that in carrying the Human Nature which He has assumed forward to death, the Eternal Being will have other and higher purposes in view than would be possible to the noblest and saintliest of His creatures. Certainly, when the Incarnation is a matter of settled and serious belief, the mind does utterly recoil from and reject any positive assertion

[u] Cf. Newman's Parochial Sermons, vi. 6. "The Incarnate Son a Sufferer and Sacrifice," especially pp. 77, 78.

that the Passion of the Son of God involved nothing beyond an exhibition of the highest attainments of creaturely morality. If God had revealed nothing, it might well have been urged that human reason could determine nothing as to the effects of the Passion. But if human thought could determine nothing positively on such a subject, it is equally incapacitated, in reason and soberness, for deciding negatively that this or that revealed consequence of the Passion is to be rejected as inconsistent with some private human theory of the attributes of God. Those who deny the Incarnation naturally do not admit that Jesus Christ offered on the Cross "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world[x]." But any thoughtful man who seriously and intelligently believes that God was really manifest in the Flesh, would at least have great difficulty in believing that the Incarnate Victim could die, yet with *no* results distinct in kind from those which follow upon the death of His own missionaries and martyrs. Christians who adore the self-humiliation of Infinite Charity in the manger-cradle at Bethlehem, will almost expect some new insights into the Mind and purposes of the Supreme Being on Mount Calvary. Nor is a revealed truth which distances or defeats the precarious anticipations of created reason, on that account inaccessible to true faith; since faith reposes with intrepid assurance upon the Wisdom and Holiness of God Who speaks in revelation.

Is it granted that Christ is, morally speaking, a perfect Man? Then He is more than Man; since He puts forward claims[y], which if they are not simple and necessary truths, are blasphemous pretensions. Is His Divinity confessed, honestly and frankly? Is He God in such sense,

[x] Communion Service.

[y] St. Matt. xi. 27. St. Luke x. 21. St. John viii. 58; x. 30.

"that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father[z]?" Then the Gospel narrative of the Passion is to be read by the light which is shed on the real purpose of those Sacred Sufferings in the Epistles, and, in particular, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed, to Christians who confess the true Godhead of Christ, the Apostolic teaching respecting His Death must seem to lie far within the range of its possible consequences. The Apostles teach that mankind are slaves, and that Christ on the Cross furnishes their ransom. Christ crucified is voluntarily devoted and accursed. He is paying the penalty which sin inevitably merits. He is washing human nature in the stream of His own Blood. He is reconciling sinful man to a holy, loving, but offended God[a]. The truth which underlies and illuminates the Apostolical language is the truth of our Saviour's Godhead. "It is," says Hooker, "the Son of God condemned, the Son of God, and no other person, crucified; which only one point of Christian belief, *the infinite worth of the Son of God,* is the very ground of all things believed concerning life and salvation, by that which Christ either did or suffered as man in our behalf[b]."

What wonder then if the ritual language and sacrificial system of the Jewish economy, to which, men tell us, the Apostles accommodated their conceptions of the Passion, have in truth no abiding religious interest or meaning apart from that mighty event! The Passion was the reality: the Jewish sacrifices were the shadows. The sacrifices were but relative and temporary; the Passion was the absolute, and, in its effects, the eternal fact which could really explain them.

[z] St. John v. 23.

[a] Gal. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 1-3. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iv. 5. Rev. i. 5, 1 St. Peter ii. 24, &c.

[b] Eccl. Pol., V. liii. 4.

Who that thinks steadily, believingly, on the Divinity of Christ, can marvel at any revealed result of His death? The conclusion almost inevitably seems to be less, far less than might be expected from the tremendous, the incomprehensible premise. Who shall, nay, who can gainsay it, if the Divine Christ when crucified is "bearing our sins in His own Body on the tree[c];" if He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" if "by one offering He is perfecting for ever them that are sanctified;" if He is the true Melchizedek, Who since He must have somewhat to offer, "offers Himself;" if He is at once an omnipotent Priest and Victim[d]? Why should we marvel that Scripture speaks of the precious Blood that issues forth from His Wounds, with such remarkable emphasis, with such significant and varied epithets; that it is "the Blood of sprinkling;" "the Blood which speaketh better things than that of Abel;" "the precious Blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and immaculate;" the Blood with which the Church was bought; the Blood which "cleanseth from all sin[e]? What room is there for astonishment if the Passion, which to sight was such a humiliation, be to the eye of faith a signal victory; if the record of human condemnation, like some discredited document, is cancelled when it is affixed to the Cross of salvation by the very nails which pierce the sacred Flesh of the Redeemer[f]! What wonder is it that the principalities and powers of evil are stripped by the Crucified One of their prowess and empire, and, like captives in a Roman triumph, are compelled to illustrate the victory of their Conqueror[g]! What wonder, if the Passion were thus indeed a triumph, that the Lamb in His ascended

[c] 1 St. Pet. ii. 24.

[d] Rev. xiii. 8. Heb. x. 14; vii. 17–27. Eph. ii. 13; i. 7. Col. i. 14. Rev. i. 5. 1 St. John i. 7.

[e] Heb. xii. 24. 1 Peter i. 19.

[f] Col. ii. 14.

[g] Ibid. 15.

glory is still "as it had been slain[h];" that the King of kings in His last recorded Apocalypse rides amid the hosts of heaven "clothed in a vesture dipped in Blood[i]!" What wonder that when the Only-begotten Son "has truly suffered to reconcile His Father to us and to be a Sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of men," the relations which previously subsisted between earth and heaven, between God and His creatures, should have been changed, and that a New Creation should have entered into history!

Certainly, when from such chapters as the third of the Epistle to the Romans, or the ninth of that to the Hebrews, we look back on the Gospel narrative of the tragical mystery of this day, we cannot but mark how through the Redeemer's humiliations and agony His Deity flashes forth upon us. The redeemed and regenerated Church, as she reads the inspired story of her Lord's sufferings, may well exclaim, "The Son of God it was Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Every ancient utterance of His Spirit respecting Himself is scrupulously fulfilled, and justified. And as His very enemies advance to apprehend Him, they involuntarily pay homage to His Omnipotence; they "go backward and fall to the ground[k]." The Roman governor contemplates his prisoner with embarrassment and awe, not merely as a holy man, but as a preternatural Being. The centurion cannot resist the inference that He is the Son of God[l]. The majestic silence of Christ, challenged and insulted before His judges, what is it but a concrete manifestation of God as He reigns in human history, bearing with man's sin and unbelief and error, because He can afford to wait—"patiens quia æternus[m]"? The seven last Words of Christ,—how deep, how inexhaustible, how world-embracing is their meaning! The rent rocks,

[h] Rev. v. 6. [i] Ibid. xix. 13. [k] St. John xviii. 6.
[l] St. Matt. xxvii. 54. [m] St. Augustine.

the darkness over all the earth, the open graves—what were these portents but tokens of the profound sympathy of the natural world with the awful anguish of its Creator? Throughout the narrative the Divine Person of the Sufferer is scarcely veiled beneath His suffering and bruised Manhood. And on the other hand, each detail of the Passion is illuminated with terrible meaning by the doctrine of Christ's eternal Person. That buffeted Face, that thorn-crowned Brow, those nailed Hands and Feet, what are they but features, integral parts of That Nature Which God has for ever united to His own? It is none other than the Infinite and Everlasting Being upon Whom His creatures are thus venting their scorn, and hate, and cruelty [n]. He indeed pleaded for their pardon on the ground that they understood not the significance of their act: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do [o]." But we Christians do know what in very deed they did. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him That is True, and we are in Him That is True, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God, and Eternal Life [p]." Our knowledge of the Divinity of Jesus is part of that "hidden wisdom," which before the Day of Pentecost "none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory [q]."

III. "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." The Eternal Being gave Himself for the creature which His Hands had made. He gave Himself to poverty, to toil, to humiliation, to agony, to the Cross. He gave Himself *ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ*, for my benefit; but also *ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ*, in my place. In this sense of the preposition, St. Paul claimed

n See this worked out in detail with unrivalled beauty by Newman, ubi supra.

o St. Luke xxiii. 34. p 1 St. John v. 20. q 1 Cor. ii. 8.

the services of Onesimus as a substitute for those which were due to him from Philemon—ἵνα ὑπὲρ σοῦ μοὶ διακονῇ[r]. Such a substitution of Christ for the guilty sinner is the ground of the Satisfaction which Christ has made upon the Cross for human sin. But on what principle did the sinless One thus take the place of the guilty? Was it, as men speak, an arbitrary arrangement, for which no other account can be given than the manifested Will of the Father? No; the substitution of the suffering Christ for the perishing sinner arose directly out of the terms of the Incarnation. The Human Nature Which our Lord assumed was none other than the very nature of the sinner, only without its sin. The Son of God took on Him human nature, not a human personality. "He took not angels, but the seed of Abraham[s]." Therefore He becomes the Redeemer of our several persons, because He is already the Redeemer of this our common nature, which He has made for ever His own[t]. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As human nature was present in Adam, when by his representative sin he ruined his posterity; so was Human Nature present in Christ our Lord, when by the voluntary offering of His sinless Self, He "bare our sins in His Own Body on the tree[u]." For Christ is the second Head of our race. Our nature is His own. He carried It with Him through life to death. He made It do and bear that which was utterly beyond Its native strength. His Eternal Person gave infinite merit to Its acts and Its sufferings. In Him It died, rose, ascended, and was perfectly well-pleasing to the All-Holy. Thus, by no forced or artificial transaction, but in virtue of His existing representative relation to the human family, He gave

[r] Cf. Bishop Ellicott on Gal. iii. 13.
[s] Heb. ii. 16. Hooker, Eccl. Pol., V. lii. 3.
[t] 1 Cor. xv. 20.
[u] 1 St. Peter ii. 24.

Himself to be *ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*—a ransom for all [x]. In intention and efficacy His sufferings were endured on behalf of all who share His human nature. In point of fact they avail to pardon those who, through faith and the Sacraments, are livingly one with Him, so that His Personal Acts have become their own.

And, as the Church of England asserts in her thirty-first Article, and in the most sacred prayer of the most solemn of her services, the Death of our Lord was thus a "satisfaction" for human sin. It freed man, as the earlier Fathers rejoiced to remember, from bondage to Satan; it also paid the debt which man owed, and which man of himself could not pay, to the Justice and Sanctity of God. St. Anselm [y] formalized one side of this teaching of Scripture and the Fathers; he did not really enlarge it. The doctrine of a satisfaction found its place in each of the two great schools of divinity which in the following centuries ruled the thought of the Western Church. It was perhaps most welcome to the Thomist divines, who held the redemption of man to have been the primary motive of the Divine Incarnation [z]. The Scotist theology, laying particular stress upon certain statements of St. Paul [a], rejoiced especially to exhibit the Incarnation as the eternal purpose of God, entertained irrespectively of the sin of man [b]. According to the Scotist doctrine, the

[x] 1 Tim. ii. 6.

[y] A slightly different estimate is stated with great force and ability in Mr. Oxenham's "Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement," p. 75, sqq.

[z] For a summary of the arguments compare De Lugo, De Mysterio Incarnationis, disp. vii. sect. 1, 2. Such passages as St. John iii. 16; 1 Tim. i. 5; Gal. iv. 4, 5, seem decisively to support the Thomist doctrine. So the Nicene Creed, "Who for us men, *and for our salvation*, came down from heaven, and was incarnate;" and St. Augustine, "Si homo non periisset, Filius hominis non venisset."—*Serm. VIII. de Verb. Apost.*

[a] Ephes. i. 4. Col. i. 26.

[b] It is noteworthy how nearly Scotus anticipated some modern Pantheistic theories which deny the dogma of creative activity in God, and which pro-

Incarnate Being was originally destined to be the crown and glory of a race of sinless creatures. The Passion was a modification, so to speak, of the original design; it was prescribed and accepted by Infinite Love, with a view to meeting the needs of sinful and perishing humanity. In an unfallen world the Incarnate Lord would still have offered sacrifice. For the idea of sacrifice is anterior to that of sin; it is an acknowledgment due from His most perfect creatures to the high Majesty of God. But in an unfallen world, sacrifice would have been eucharistic, not propitiatory. When, however, the Son of God had, by His assumed Humanity, undertaken to represent a race, which was actually a race of sinners, His Obedience to the Divine Will took the form of expiation, and that which might have been only a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the All-Good became in fact a Satisfaction for sin to the All-Just. Scotist no less than Thomist theologians recognized both the need and the fact of a Satisfaction for sin.

That Satisfaction was not the mere payment of an obligation which man had incurred; it was not the rendering of a bare equivalent for human sin to the outraged Justice of God. It was more than plenary; it was superabundant; since it was offered in a finite nature, but by

claim a universal restoration of moral beings. De div. prædest. II. 46, I. 44; especially, as to the first point, V. 311. "Dum vero Divinam Naturam esse finem omnium intransgressilemque terminum, Quem omnia appetunt et in Quo limitem motus sui naturalis constituunt, conspicor; invenio Eam neque creatam esse, *neque creantem*. A nullo siquidem creari potest Natura Quæ a Seipsâ est *neque aliud creat*. Quid creabit, dum Ipsa omnia in omnibus fuerit, et in nullo nisi Ipsâ apparebit?" A friendly critic in the *Union Review* (Jan. 1866) pleads earnestly for the Scotist view of the Divine Incarnation. Admitting to the full what he urges as to the force and depth of that representation, the writer would feel less hesitation as to its claims, if he could be sure that it had no real connexion with theories which obliterate some of those fundamental distinctions upon which Revelation itself rests. Cf. Neander, Church History, VI. pp. 167, 168, sqq., who quotes the passage cited above.

an Infinite Being. We may shrink indeed from saying that such a Satisfaction must have exerted a peremptory claim on the Justice of God. Needed it not, after all, to be accepted by Infinite Mercy? Might it not have been dispensed with? Might not the Almighty Father, Infinite in His resources, have saved the world without exacting the Death of His Son as the price of its salvation [c]?

Here Revelation does not encourage conjecture. Enough that the Satisfaction actually offered, has been as really accepted. We may presume, without hardihood, that, if God might have saved us in other ways, He has chosen the way which was in itself the best. And the freedom of the Father's gift of His Blessed Son, the freedom of the Son's self-oblation, are insisted on in Scripture, as if with the object of condemning by anticipation any mercantile estimate of Infinite Love. There is a profusion of self-sacrifice which meets us every where in the history of the Passion. Throughout, it is the history of a "plenteous Redemption." The bearing of the Divine Victim is not that of one who is tendering an equivalent for a debt which had been incurred. He does not seek to undergo only that precise amount of ignominy and pain which was needed for the Redemption. He has offered His Human Will without reserve; and His offering has been accepted. True! one blow from the soldier's sword, or hand, one lash from the scourge, one pang of Christ's sacred Soul, one drop of His precious Blood, might have redeemed our world, or a thousand such worlds as ours. For each Act of submission, each throb of pain, had infinite value in the sight of Heaven; not only as representing the perfect offering of our Lord's

[c] Hooker, E. P., V. li. 3. "The world's salvation was without the Incarnation of the Son of God a thing impossible: not simply impossible, but impossible it being presupposed that the Will of God was no otherwise to have it saved than by the Death of His Own Son."

Will, but as being penetrated by the informing presence and boundless merits of His Divinity. Yet Jesus, Who might have saved us thus, was in truth enamoured of profuse self-sacrifice. "In His love and in His pity He redeemed us [d];" and His pity and His love knew no bounds. He had surrendered His throne on high, His angel-ministers, His earthly home; He had left His Mother and His friends; and when His doctrine and His miracles had brought to Him fair fame and popular ascendency He chose to become "a worm and no man, the very scorn of men and the outcast of the people [e]." And so He gave His Face to the smiters, and His Cheeks to them that pulled off the hair. He gave His Body to physical torture; He gave His Soul to an unspeakable spiritual Agony. He offered the long history of His suffering Life, and of His Death of shame and pain, to atone for the sins of us guilty men. He gave all to that Will, in Which we are sanctified, by the offering of His Body [f]. Less might have merited the Father's grace; less might have satisfied His justice. But Jesus would display the range, the power, the prodigal generosity of Divine Charity. The Cross was to be not merely the instrument of His punishment, but the symbol and the throne of His conquering Love. "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me [g]."

"He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." Each sinner, each saint around His Cross might have used the words of the Apostle. For His Blessed Mother and St. John; for the Roman judge and for the Roman soldiers; for the Chief Priest and for the Pharisee; for the vilest and hardest of His executioners, and for the thieves who hung dying beside Him, our Lord gave Himself to death. For all who have been first and greatest, for all who have

[d] Isa. lxiii. 9.
[e] Ps. xxii. 6.
[f] Heb. x. 10.
[g] St. John xii. 32.

been least and last in human history, for all whom we have loved or seen, for our separate souls, He gave Himself. True, His creatures indeed are still free to accept and appropriate or to refuse His gift. But no lost soul shall murmur hereafter that the tender loving-kindness of God has not willed to save it. No saint in glory shall pretend that aught in him has been accepted and crowned, save the infinite merit, the priceless gifts of his Redeemer. The dying love of Jesus embraces the race; and yet it concentrates itself with direct, and as it seems to us, with exclusive intensity, upon each separate soul. He dies for all, and yet He dies for each; as if each soul were the solitary object of His Incarnation and of His Death.

It is well that we should individually realize this. Doubtless self may be carried even into the regions of sacred thought with disastrous results. Men may forget thanksgiving in prayer, the Church in the needs of the personal soul, the glory of God in this or that end, which they are for the moment bent on attaining. So the Atonement *may* be valued *only* as the source of personal peace; and the Incarnation *only* as an explanation of the power and completeness of the Atonement. But to-day beneath the Cross we may each of us legitimately fix our soul's eye on the great Sufferer, and we may say with His Apostle, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*."

Times doubtless there are in every true life, when no other sight than that of the Crucified is tolerable to the soul in its torturing sense of guilt:—

> "At mens sibi conscia factis
> Præmetuens adhibet stimulos, torretque flagellis;
> Nec videt interea qui terminus esse malorum
> Possit, quive siet pœnarum denique finis:
> Atque eadem metuit magis hæc ne in morte gravescant [h]."

Who among us has not shrunk thus fearfully from self,

h Lucret. iii. 1031—1035.

from God, from the thought of death? Who has not known hours of solitude, of anguish, of depression, during which the Holy Spirit of God has revealed to the soul its inward load of sin? At such times nothing can bring help and comfort but the inward sight of our Lord Jesus Christ crucified. These precious opportunities are irremediably lost, if they do not lead us to His Cross. The sinner takes his place in spirit on Calvary: he gazes on the mangled Form, on the Eyes closing in death, on the sacred Wounds; he is taught by a heavenly whisper to say with the Apostle, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." It is by the Cross alone as a revelation and an application of the eternal love of God to the soul that the sinner is restored.

Certain it is that all sacraments, all prayers, all authoritative words of pardon, all sanctifying works of mercy, draw whatever they have of power or virtue from the Fountain which flows on Calvary. In the Death of the Son of God we may find the consecration of every freshened sense of the fathomless abyss of being which each of us bears within himself. This picture of triumphant suffering braces and educates all those undefined yearnings for a higher, purer, more supernatural life which force their way, ever and anon, upwards, heavenwards, through the thick maze of earthly cares that weigh souls downwards to the dust. On Mount Calvary is to be found the true secret of Christian energy; the motive which of all others is properly, intensely, pre-eminently Christian; the strength of each individual Christian life, the certificate of the Church's final triumph. This voluntary outpouring of the Infinite Charity of God upon His defiled and degraded creature touches the inmost heart of man. This self-oblation of the Perfect Moral Being for the sinner who grovels in inherited and self-augmented corruption, has—it is an experience of eighteen centuries

—a controlling, subduing, elevating, tranquillizing power which no other truth can equally command. It is not the awful mysteriousness of Christ's Pre-existent Life, it is not either the lowliness of His manger-bed, or the scene of His Ministry, or the Words which He spake, and which are written for our learning, or the splendours of His ascended Manhood, that have sunk deepest into the heart of His Church. From the first and until now, among all races, in all climes, as of old in Galatia[i], προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος. The picture upon which faith loves best to dwell is the Crucifixion. It is the suffering Form of the Son of Man which is most welcome and precious to us perishing sinners: for in that Form, bruised and pierced, we read God's answer to our deepest sense of need; we understand, as we adore, that we are "justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus[k]."

Of all days in the year Good Friday is the most fitted for solitary intercourse with God. Let us then, to-day, indeed seek to "know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified[l]." Let us "consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself[m]," such agony of Body and of Soul. Let us pray Him to deepen or to restore within us the sense of His peace, of His pardon. To gaze on the great Sufferer must be for all hearts that are not utterly hard and dull, to learn a higher unselfishness, a lowlier humility, a severer standard of Christian life. The love of Jesus reproduces itself in the lives of His working and suffering children. In some shape they are ever giving themselves for God and for their fellow-men. True love is no thin disembodied sentiment. Love asserts its presence in a practical, visible way, when once it really lives. It is the very soul of all that earthly labour which, for Christ's sake, will be owned hereafter.

[i] Gal. iii. 1. [k] Rom. iii. 24. [l] 1 Cor. ii. 2. [m] Heb. xii. 3.

Jesus Christ did not die upon the Cross that we might lead a self-seeking life, whether by indulging our lower appetites, or by wasting intellectual power upon subjects which, however gratifying to ourselves, achieve nothing for the honour of God or for the good of men. Only when we devote ourselves according to our measure to God's glory, and to the enlightening, or cheering, or supporting our brethren, do we enter into the practical spirit of our Lord's Death. Self-renouncement is the temper of which His Death was the highest expression. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him Which died for them, and rose again[n]."

Threatening clouds are now gathering over the sky of Europe, and men say that we may daily expect to hear that a war has commenced, of which none may venture to limit the range or the duration[o]. On such a day, beneath the Cross of Him Who died to reconcile earth and heaven, we might indeed desire to forget even these grave anxieties. Yet we do well to remember them, if they should remind us, that no material improvements in the outward aspects of human life, no mental culture, no social refinement, no political advancement, no lapse of years can eradicate the deep-seated evil of that nature of ours which was represented on the Cross by a sinless Saviour. Man will never outgrow the need of the great Expiation. Man will never be able to dispense with the cleansing virtue of the Atoning Blood. And it would be a work of Christian charity, in strict harmony with the purpose of this day's observance, if each one of us should here resolve, on this very day, secretly and earnestly to beseech Him Who alone can govern the unruly wills and

[n] 2 Cor. v. 15.

[o] This sermon was preached a few days before the beginning of the campaign of Solferino, in 1859.

affections of sinful men, that He would look once more on the Face of His Anointed, and vouchsafe to give peace in our time to the angry and distracted nations. May He take pity upon us, and upon Christian Europe, "not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences through Jesus Christ our Lord"! In ourselves, indeed, there is nothing that should stay His Arm or invite His mercy. But may He have respect to the Acts and Sufferings of His Sinless Son! . . . . Only while contemplating the inestimable merits of the Redeemer can we dare to hope that our Heavenly Father will overlook the countless provocations which He receives at the hands of the redeemed.

SERMON X.

THE RISEN LIFE.

COL. iii. 1.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above.

ST. PAUL here implies a practical contrast without exactly asserting it. Colosse had recently been the scene of proselytizing activity on the part of some religious theorists. They seem to have combined a theosophic doctrine about the nature of God and the office and worship of angels, with the recommendation of certain practical observances, proper not so much to the Jewish ceremonial law as to some later Cabbalistic developments. The Apostle implicitly condemns these speculations and observances as alike human and earthly, and therefore as unworthy of men who had been called to something higher, to something divine. If the Colossians had indeed risen with Christ, let them act as the moral, the intellectual children of His Resurrection. Men who did not possess a revelation from Him "in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily[a]," might fittingly occupy themselves with guesses at truth which human thought had elevated into dogmas, or with practical suggestions which a human authority had prescribed as laws. The Colossians had risen above

[a] Col. ii. 9.

these things; they had risen with Christ. They were emancipated from the trammels of the human and the earthly. Let them be loyal to the idea, to the principle of their resurrection. The risen life had its clearly defined obligations no less than its glorious privileges. Those who had in very deed shared in Christ's Resurrection-life should seek things above the level of that tomb which, with Him and through Him, they had left behind. A consideration this, my brethren, sufficiently practical, and (as the use of this Scripture in the Easter services of itself suggests[b]) peculiarly suited to the Paschal season. Brighter far than any other days in the Christian year for the living members of God's redeemed family are the forty days through which we now are passing. At the thought of the Divine Saviour's triumph over death, the Christian heart swells with a joy, nay, almost (may I not say it?) with a chastened pride. In the realm of spiritual life, Easter feelings seem to correspond to that union of deep thankfulness and of triumphant exultation with which an Englishman, at any rate, of the last generation was wont to hail the anniversary of Waterloo. "The Lord hath risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon[c]." He has risen, and we Christians have a share in His Resurrection. "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it[d]." . . . But high spirits are not without their attendant dangers; and it is never so necessary to insist upon the practical aspects of a truth, as when we are being carried along by the full tide of buoyant feeling which has been stimulated by dwelling on it.

1. "Risen with Christ." Observe here, first of all, the relation in which the miraculous, external, historical fact,

[b] Epistle for Easter Day. [c] St. Luke xxiv. 34.
[d] Ps. cxviii. 24.

that Jesus Christ our Lord rose from the dead, is made to stand to the practical spiritual Christian life. In the earliest teaching of the Apostles the Resurrection prominently dominates over all other Christian doctrines. That which chiefly gives it this early prominence is manifestly its evidential value. With the Apostles, especially in the Pentecostal period, Christ's Resurrection is the palmary proof, the invincible assertion of the truth of Christianity. The story how Jesus, after being crucified and buried, rose in triumphant life from His grave, provokes, as Jewish multitudes listen to it, a sense of wondering awe. It rouses the attention even of the most indifferent; and the interest thus created is deepened by reflection; in the event, it is deepened and consolidated into a defined conviction of the truth of the religion of Jesus Christ. The Resurrection is thus the usual, the effective weapon, by which the Apostles force their way through the dense obstructive blocks of Jewish or heathen thought around them.

The Apostles had themselves seen Jesus since His Resurrection. They had spoken with Him. They had eaten with Him. Nay, such was His mercy and His condescension, that they had at His invitation touched and handled Him. They had tested a first impression again and again and under varying circumstances. That Jesus was literally risen, was for the Apostles a fact resting upon distinct evidence of their senses. Accordingly their first ministerial effort was to publish this fact, and so to let it do its proper work in the understandings and the consciences of men. When the author of the Acts of the Apostles is describing the missionary action of the earliest Church, he tells us that "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus[e]." With this general description tally the detailed records of

[e] Acts iv. 33.

the earliest Christian preaching which have been preserved to us. St. Stephen's apology indeed was cut short by the violence of his judges before his argument had been allowed to reach its natural, its inevitable climax[f]. St. Philip the Deacon, when instructing the Ethiopian Eunuch, is said to have "preached unto him Jesus[g]." St. Philip must surely have preached Jesus Risen, no less than Jesus Crucified. Specially noteworthy as to this point is the recorded teaching of St. Peter. His words on the day of Pentecost,—"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses[h],"—sound the keynote of the Apostolical doctrine. And yet the Resurrection is not more prominent in the teaching of St. Peter than in the teaching of St. Paul. If St. Peter proves to the multitude on the day of Pentecost that the Resurrection was the fulfilment of Jewish, especially of Davidical prophecy[i]; St. Paul proves this fulfilment, almost in the same language, in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch[k]. St. Peter is preaching to the people in the Porch of Solomon, or he is justifying himself before the educated sceptics who at that time composed, or at any rate controlled the Sanhedrim. He points fearlessly, again and again, to the Resurrection, as the explanation of the miraculous power which he exercised, and as the warrant, nay as the irresistible motive, of his determined activity[l]. St. Paul is insisting on the great argument for natural religion before an audience representing the jaded and languid indifference which had resulted from centuries of fruitless speculation. He informs the Athenians at the close of his discourse of a startling supernatural fact. The moral phenomena of the world demanded a future judgment; the Resurrection proved that Jesus Christ was to be the Judge[m]. If St.

f Acts vii. 53, 54.
g Acts viii. 35.
h Acts ii. 32.
i Acts ii. 25—32.
k Acts xiii. 32—37.
l Acts iii. 15, 16; iv. 9, 10; v. 29—31.
m Acts xvii. 31.

Peter is instructing Cornelius in preparation for his baptism, the fact of the Resurrection is the most prominent feature of his instruction[n]. If St. Paul is closing his last apology before Agrippa, the prophecy that Messias was to die and to rise from death is the crowning point of his self-justification[o]. These correspondences might be extended; but you may be reminded of a theory which sees in them nothing more than a later desire to harmonize conflicting elements in the post-Apostolic Church, and consequently a proof of the untrustworthiness of the narrative which contains them[p]. The Tubingen school, however, still professes its belief in the Pauline authorship of the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians. But the Epistle to the Romans opens with a reference to the Resurrection, as a powerful demonstration of our Lord's Divinity[q]. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, written before the earliest Gospel, exhibits the Resurrection as already part of an Apostolical Creed[r]. According to St. Paul, the

[n] Acts x. 40, 41.

[o] Acts xxvi. 23.

[p] Baumgarten's Apostolic History contains a full reply to the theory of Zeller. Baumgarten, however, it should be observed, as a presbyterian, is naturally unable to do justice to the full teaching of the Acts of the Apostles respecting the real character and structure of the Church of Christ. These are admirably drawn out in Bishop Wordsworth's Commentary on the Acts.

[q] Rom. i. 4.

[r] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. Baur is somewhat embarrassed in endeavouring to account for the upgrowth of belief in the Resurrection. He takes it for granted that no real objective Resurrection of our Lord from the grave ever took place. "Alle, welche an kein wirkliches materielles Wunder glauben, können nur annehmen, dass der Glaube an die Auferstehung aus dem ganzen geistigen Process hervorgegangen ist, welcher nach dem Tode Jesu im Geiste der Jünger erfolgte. Nach dem ganzen Eindruck, welchen das Leben Jesu, und Seine letzten Schicksale auf sie gemacht hatten, war es für sie eine schlechthinige Unmöglichkeit zu denken, dass alles, was im Glauben an Jesus nun schon als absolute Wahrheit für ihr Bewusstsein feststand, in Seinem Tode mit Einem Male zu Grabe gegangen sei. Auch in Seinem Tode konnten sie sich Ihn nur als den Lebenden denken: Er musste als der

Resurrection then rested upon the testimony of more than two hundred and fifty still living eye-witnesses[s]. According to St. Paul, the Resurrection is the very corner-stone of the whole fabric of Christian teaching[t]. According to St. Paul, if the Resurrection could be dis-

Gestorbene leben, weil an Ihm, an Seiner Person alles für sich hieng, was sie glaubten und hofften. Wie die Jünger nach dem Tode Jesu in die Nothwendigkeit Seiner Auferstehung sich hineindachten, sehen wir aus der Art und Weise, wie sie durch Anwendung Alttestamentlicher Stellen Sein ganzes Schicksal für ihr religiöses Bewusstsein sich zurechtzulegen suchten. Er musste sterben, aber Er musste auch auferstehen, weil der Tod keine Gewalt über Ihn haben konnte. Vgl. Apg. ii. 24. Gott hat Ihn auferweckt, indem Er die Schmerzen des Todes löste, weil es nicht möglich war, dass Er von ihm überwältigt werde. Vgl. Luc. xxiv. 26. Ueberzeugte man sich aus dem alten Testament dass es Christus vorausbestimmt war, zu leiden und zu sterben, so war in der Nothwendigkeit Seines Todes auch die innere Nothwendigkeit seiner Auferstehung enthalten. Stellt man sich nun vor, wie diese innere Nothwendigkeit in ihrer ganzen Bedeutung vor dem Geiste der Jünger stand, und bedenkt man noch dazu, wie überhaupt *das religiöse Bewusstsein jener Urperiode des Christenthums sehr ekstatischer Art war*, wer könnte es für psychologisch unmöglich halten, dass die Gedanken, mit welchen sich die Jünger in ihrem Geiste so lebhaft beschäftigen, sich ihnen zu Visionen gestalteten, die ihnen als Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen galten? . . . Man kann daher sagen, wenn Christus nicht leiblich auferstand, so musste Er geistig auferstehen in dem Glauben der Jünger" (*Vorlesungen über Neutestamentliche Theologie*, von Dr. F. C. Baur, Leips. 1864, pp. 126, 127). In plain words, the disciples were weak-minded enthusiasts, possessed of a strong conviction that the Messiah was prophetically destined to triumph over death. According to Baur, Jesus never did really rise from His grave. But the fervour of the disciples made fact and inquiry unnecessary. The disciples addressed themselves to their countrymen and to the Roman world as the heralds of what was a mere fancy; and they succeeded in persuading the world and themselves that their fancy was a fact. . . . Surely it is easier to believe in the Bible narrative than in this wild endeavour to propagate disbelief in it. Nothing is more certain than that the belief of the disciples in the Resurrection rested primarily on the evidence of their senses (Acts. ii. 32; x. 41). Their belief in the prophetic announcements was far from being so strong as Baur imples (St. Luke xxiv. 21, 25). And, as if to anticipate such insinuations as that of the ecstatic credulity of the disciples, the good providence of God, "for the more confirmation of the faith, suffered His holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful of His Son's Resurrection." Collect for St. Thomas's Day (St. John xx. 25—29).

[s] 1 Cor. xv. 6. [t] Ibid. 14.

proved, the Apostles had propagated a lie in the Name of God, and the idea that God had pardoned sin was an empty delusion [u]. This unchallenged Epistle, as no other book in the New Testament, rests the doctrine of the Resurrection upon its historical base, and pursues it to its extreme theological consequences. In the light of this great truth we behold the whole multitude of the glorified dead gathered at length beneath the Throne of their risen Redeemer; and thus, according to no merely idealistic representation, but as an objective and literal fact, foretold by the Apostle [x], death is swallowed up by the victory of Triumphant Life.

In the text we encounter a very different aspect of the Resurrection. St. Paul here teaches us its relation, not to Christian belief, but to Christian living. Here the Resurrection is not pressed upon us as a mere "historical or external fact" or as a "detached and unfruitful dogma;" it is a vitalizing principle in the living soul. Indeed, all Christian doctrine is, in the living Christian soul, inseparable from Christian practice. This practical relation between Christian dogma and Christian morality is especially observable in St. Paul's Epistles. Undoubtedly St. Paul's general method is to devote the earlier section of an Epistle to what is mainly a doctrinal statement, and the later portion to moral and spiritual exhortations. But the two sections are not sharply separated, as a dogmatic treatise might be separated by a modern writer from a treatise on Christian morals. In St. Paul, the moral element interpenetrates doctrine, and rises spontaneously out of it; while the dogmatic truth is continually re-asserted as the motive or basis of the morality which the Apostle is enforcing. As a matter of method and for the sake of intellectual distinctness, morals and dogma may be digested by later Church writers into

[u] 1 Cor. xv. 15, 17. [x] Ibid. 52–54.

separate treatises. As a matter of fact they are inextricably blended with and necessary to each other, whether in the heart of the Christian who is serving God, or in the Divine Scripture, which exhibits the mind of God respecting His servants.

Now here we see the doctrine of the Resurrection doing its work, not in the outer court of the Christian's understanding, but at the very heart and centre of his spiritual life. The Christian is "risen with Christ." The Resurrection is not merely an historical fact, a transcendent and significant miracle, a fulfilment of some prophecies, a warrant that other prophecies will be fulfilled. Certainly it *is* an external objective event, which took place eighteen centuries and a half ago; and we may not resolve it into a merely subjective experience of our Lord's first followers without utterly discrediting the very base of Christian evidences. But the Resurrection has a subjective side; it is a principle of spiritual energy as well as a fact of human history. In the text the Resurrection is in close juxtaposition with, nay it gives the form to, the life of the soul. It is a germinant principle, out of which the soul derives its new life, and by which the laws and obligations of that life must be determined. Do you object that the Apostle's expression is, after all, a metaphor? I might demur to such an objection; because St. Paul elsewhere uses language which seems to imply that he regarded the resurrection of a dead body from the grave and the resurrection of a soul from moral death, as only two analogous effects of one and the same Divine energy[y]. But suppose that we say that St. Paul *is* using a metaphor. What then? Surely a metaphor means something; although persons of inaccurate habits of mind sometimes seem to speak as if Scripture was meaningless whenever it was metaphori-

[y] Eph. i. 18–20.

cal. A metaphor conveys a truth under the form of an illustration or a picture. But it conveys a truth just as certainly as does a plain unmetaphorical statement. The question before us is, What is the truth which is latent beneath the metaphor? Are we to suppose that the Apostle is recklessly flourishing a fine phrase to which he attaches no definite idea, or that the idea which he does attach to it is too vague, too pointless, too ethereal, if you will, to be seized by our intelligence and stated in our language? It was once observed by a person of great honesty of purpose, and gifted with a singular power of appreciating and describing the phases of religious experience through which he had passed, that for many years of his life he had read St. Paul, without supposing that the great Apostle meant to assert any thing definite in many of his descriptions of the Christian life. For this person, such an expression as "risen with Christ" was the mere exuberance of rhetoric. It described, as he thought, no tangible fact; it represented no ascertainable idea. To his apprehension, the Apostle seemed to have a stock of phraseology at command, which was produced from time to time; the combinations of words being varied, without any correspondent variation in the ideas conveyed. He used to say, that in reading St. Paul, he considered that all was very good, but that a great deal was perfectly meaningless. Now I shall presently notice a spiritual cause of this singular intellectual misfortune. For the moment, let us note that it *is* a misfortune; unless indeed to be vague and unintelligent is seriously desirable, when it is possible to secure intelligence and precision. A man who closes his eyes to the dogmatic teaching of Holy Scripture, by habitually saying to himself that this or that statement is only a metaphor, is, upon the best construction of his case, the victim of an intellectual weakness. It may be that he is guilty

of something much more serious than intellectual failure. When we have to deal with a metaphor, we have simply to ask ourselves, What is the translation—what is, so to term it, the prosaic equivalent of the metaphor? what is its point? how far may you press it without exaggerating the aim of the writer? how far are you bound to press it, if you would really gain or convey an insight into the writer's thought?

2. "Risen with Christ." This Resurrection, then, is a moral change; it is a spiritual movement. But observe that it is not merely a movement, a shifting of spiritual position from a lower to a higher point in the same sphere. That would be an elevation. It would not be a resurrection. A resurrection is a transfer from one state to another. It is a passage from the darkness of the tomb to the sunshine of the upper air. It is an exchange of the coldness, stillness, corruption of death for the warmth, and movement, and undecayed energies of life. It is necessary to remark this distinction, because an elevation, whether in thought or in morals, is sometimes described as if it were equivalent to a resurrection of faith and life. Whereas, in truth, individuals, families, populations are often 'elevated' by Christianity without being in any true sense "risen with Christ." A certain mental and moral elevation is a natural result of close contact with a Divine religion. This elevation may even be received by those who are wholly unconscious of receiving it. It comes to men as if from a subtle influence afloat in the atmosphere. It passes unnoticed into the vitals of a literary school, of a philosophical system, of a political society. It may be thenceforward detected in the presence of half-formed ideas, and fitful currents of thought, and instinctive turns of expression, of which no other natural account can be given. This sort of elevation may or may not precede the conversion of a nation or

of an individual to the true Faith. It may or may not follow upon apostasy, whether national or personal, from Christianity. It may not seldom be traced in those who extend to the religion which creates it a condescending but independent patronage; and even in those who visit the very Faith which elevates them, with a bitter and relentless persecution. It arises naturally from contact with truth; even although such contact be purely external, and, with reference to the endless future, worthless. It comes to men as they gaze on the fair form of the Church of Christ; with her grand Episcopal organization, fundamentally the same, even amid divisions, throughout the world; with her vast theology for the intellect, and her perpetual worship for the heart; with her innumerable attractions for the educated and the refined; with her tender, far-reaching ministries of consolation and of mercy for the suffering and the poor. Men are 'elevated,' as they mark the individual Christian, who is seriously living for another world; whose life is an outflow of acts and words which perpetually witness to the strength and productiveness of its central fundamental principle; whose piety is at once consistent, intelligent, practical, well-regulated, genial, simple, amiable, tender, as it might seem, even to indulgence, yet withal penetrated by the strength of decision and by the flame of zeal. A man may not submit to, but he cannot be absolutely uninfluenced by, a religion which he has seen closely enough to know that it can give to a creature who carries within him the same weaknesses and passions as those of which we all are personally conscious, a heart of iron towards himself, a heart of flesh for his neighbour, a heart of fire for his God. Doubtless this moral spectacle leads, in varying degrees, to the 'elevation' of him who steadily contemplates it. It begets in him sympathies, aspirations, instincts, the sources of which he does not

analyze. It is especially likely to do so, if he is naturally open to impressions of moral beauty, or even if there be in his natural composition a vein of poetry. But the question is, What is this 'elevation,' which reaches the point of appreciation of a moral beauty external to itself, really worth? What is this 'elevation' worth, if it only provoke sympathy, and mould the outward proprieties of habit, and assert a place for itself in popular language? What is it worth—the question must be asked—if it should do no more? It is easy, my brethren, to overrate the value of such superficial improvement; and our own times have an intellectual history which suggests peculiar temptations to do so. But let us look at the matter in a concrete form.

Surely Felix underwent a certain "elevation" of conscience when he trembled at St. Paul's reasonings of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come[z]. Surely Agrippa was raised above his natural level when he could permit himself to exclaim to the prisoner who stood before him, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian[a]." The new Testament, however, would not authorize us to speak of Agrippa or of Felix as "risen with Christ." They are left, each of them, by the sacred narrative, where they were. In each case the moral pulsation dies away; and the curtain falls upon a scene of darkness. In a different sense, the Emperor Alexander Severus may be supposed to have undergone a certain 'elevation' when he assigned a niche in the private imperial Pantheon to the statue of Jesus of Nazareth. But perhaps the instances which most strikingly illustrate the difference between a superficial elevation of thought or impulse, and a moral resurrection, are to be found, not among heathen who knew Christianity only from without, but among those who, being Christians,

[z] Acts xxiv. 25. [a] Acts xxvi. 28.

have sacrificed their faith to political considerations, or to the supposed claims of contemporary inquiry.

Consider the origin and the history of that remarkable Eclectic system which in the third and fourth centuries was the great intellectual antagonist of the religion of our Lord[b]. The philosopher Ammonius was educated in the Catechetical School of Alexandria, beneath the eye of Pantænus or of St. Clement. He contrived to make intellectual capital out of the stock of truths which he had learnt within the Church, by forming a system which he inaccurately or disingenuously attributed to Plato. His system did in fact combine the form of Christian doctrine with the Platonic spirit and method. It looked so like Christianity, that for a time even Origen attended his lectures; and to this day it is a controverted point whether Ammonius himself ever actually separated from the Church. It might have seemed to us, if we had lived in Alexandria in the first quarter of the third century, that philosophy was yearning to be Christian, and that the Gospel was on the point of receiving a scientific basis at the hands of philosophy. Yet never had the Gospel a more intelligent and bitter opponent than it encountered in a system whose extreme intellectual results may be seen in Porphyry[c], and whose political action found its complete expression in the apostate Julian. The Alexandrian speculation had its day. It began as an offshoot from the Church; it learned to look with increasing disdain upon its parentage; it died as an apologist of the already expiring polytheism, while vainly endeavouring to breathe into the worn-out framework of a dead superstition the incongruous appendage of a philosophical soul. Certainly too, Julian, apostate and persecutor as he was, was in his way, 'elevated' by

[b] Newman's Arians of the Fourth Century, chap. i. sect. 4.

[c] Porphyry was a pupil of Longinus, who was himself a pupil of Ammonius Saccas.

Christianity. In his letters he applauds the brotherly love, the benevolence, the discipline of the Christian Church. He even advocates the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, if it be understood as a Platonist might understand it. Gibbon[4] represents the reign of Julian as nothing less than a reconciliation of the piety and the learning which had been divorced before; and it is impossible to deny that the Emperor's intellect and character, even to the last, bore striking traces of the powerful, although indirect action of Christian principles. Yet was Julian "risen with Christ"? Nay, dare we say this of Rousseau, who in his enthusiasm would fain enhance the beauty of the French language that he may express his sense of the beauty of the Gospel? Dare we say it of others nearer our own time, of writers of fiction, of writers of would-be history? Are they indeed "risen with Christ," who lavish their encomiums with no sparing or graceless hand upon the religion of our Lord, and who yet apologize for the errors which His Teaching condemns, or even for those dark sins, whether of body or spirit, which, as we Christians know, bar the gates of heaven against guilty and impenitent souls?

Let us be well assured, that we here touch upon a distinction which is vital. The distinction between an 'elevation' and a 'resurrection' is based upon the deeper difference that parts nature from grace. The moral elevation of a soul, of a country, of a literature, of a class, lies strictly within the sphere of nature. It may be accounted for by the operation of natural causes. The spiritual resurrection of a soul belongs to nature just as little as does the bodily raising of a corpse. It is an evidence of the real introduction of a Higher Power into humanity. It is, in short, simply and emphatically, the work of the quickening grace of God. It is essentially *super*natural.

[4] Decline and Fall, vol. ii. c. 23.

3. "Risen with Christ." At length we reach the truth which is latent beneath the Apostle's words. We are taught by them that the life of the Christian is a supernatural thing. You may ask, what is here meant by the supernatural? For it is sometimes said that the word admits of no precise explanation; and that it is brandished by orthodox divines, either with the unintelligent but harmless purpose of producing rhetorical effect, or as a shaft which may be spitefully yet effectively aimed at a theological opponent.

Remark then, that any idea of the supernatural presupposes belief in God as a personal Agent, Who is absolutely free and omnipotent in His action[e]. Clearly therefore the supernatural must be rejected by those philosophies which deny the primary truths of Theism. The Positivist must see in the idea of the supernatural a stupid phantom, which is properly relegated to what he contemptuously calls "the theological period" of human development; while the Pantheist will object to it, as implying a distinction which, if it be admitted, must be fatal to the essential principles of his philosophy.

The ground of Pantheistic thought is strewn with the ruins of doctrines, among the most ancient and the most fundamental known to the human mind. Pantheism confuses and crushes those great distinctions with which metaphysical science reverently surrounds and fences the idea of God, throned, in His majestic separation from creatures, at the summit of human thought. It huddles together in the entanglement of a hopeless intellectual disorder the finite and the Infinite, Substance and the phenomenon, Cause and its effect. Instead of seeing in natural order the manifest imprint of Creative Intelligence, it can even suppose that intelligence itself is the unac-

[e] Cf. Wetzer u. Wette Dict. art. "Naturalism."

countable product of a still more inexplicable order. With perfect consistency Pantheism does not tolerate a distinction between natural life, or natural intelligence, and a sphere which transcends them. For such a distinction presupposes the idea of God, the absolutely free and Almighty Creator, inflicting His Will upon a passive creation by the establishment of two distinct conditions of intelligent and conscious being. And the very idea of God Himself is destroyed by the annihilation of those distinctions which guard, to our apprehensions, His incommunicable nature and His creative energy. Pantheism cannot distinguish between nature and that which is above it; because to Pantheism nature is every thing. To Pantheism nature is God, or God is nature[f]. And in order to believe in the supernatural, we must first of all believe in the existence of a Being, Who is distinct from, and superior to, the work of His hands.

Nor would the existence of a supernatural sphere approve itself to the sensuous materialism which is making such advances in our day among the masses of the people. This materialism is sure only of what its senses can reach. It accepts what it sees, touches, eats, and smells. It is sceptical of all that lies beyond. Of course it will shrug its shoulders when you speak of a world, of movements, of beings, inaccessible to sense. To discuss the question in these regions, where questions still more fundamental have first to be discussed, is a mere loss of time and labour. Those who do not seriously believe in the existence of a Personal Living God, unfettered and all-powerful in His action, are in no position whatever to understand, I will not say the precise definition of the supernatural, but the bare possibility of any thing which could deserve the name.

[f] On the definition of Pantheism, see M. E. Saisset, *Essai de Philosophie Religieuse*, vol. ii. p. 315 sqq.

They 'believe' in nature; and the frontier of nature is the boundary of their creed.

To recognize the supernatural, a man must first believe in the invisible Maker of heaven and earth. And no serious Theist can deny the possibility of the supernatural[g]. He Who made the world which we touch by sense and by natural thought, Who upholds, and Who rules it, can, if He will, superadd to it another world which of themselves neither sense nor thought can properly touch. It may be said that this is a gratuitous supposition of miracle. But, after all, Creation itself is the first and most startling of all miracles. Yet you cannot deny the doctrine of a creation, and continue to believe in God. You cannot believe intelligently in creation and refuse to admit the possibility, that the Creator may in His perfect freedom, act above, beyond, independently of that entire sphere, physical, intellectual, and moral, which we term nature[h].

As the term supernatural enters into theology, it is generally concerned with the relations which God has established between Himself and man. The supernatural, in the case of man, is that which transcends the original and necessary conditions of human life. Between the Almighty Creator and man the creature of His Hand, certain original

[g] Compare the admission of M. Th. Bost, who is an eager advocate of an advanced Rationalism among the French Protestants:—"Cela ne veut pas dire que nous trouvons le surnaturel impossible. Quand il s'agit de Dieu, le mot d'*impossible* n'a guère de sens, et nous ne saurons jamais nous exprimer avec trop de réserve et de modestie."—*Le Protestantisme Libéral*, p. 86. Paris, 1865.

[h] "Supernaturale est quod superat vires activas et exactivas naturæ, nempe quod nec causæ naturales facere valent, nec a Deo exigunt, ut complementum sui generis: ut e. g. corpus organizatum exigit animam, ignis calorem, quæ ideirco naturalia sunt. Contra vero Divina gratia, character sacramentalis, mortui resurrectio, quæ neque viribus naturalibus haberi possunt, neque a naturâ exigi, supernaturalia sunt."—*J. Z. Mellinii, Lexicon Veterum Theologorum*, pp. 82, 83.

relations resulted from the act of creation. They are based on the natures of the Creator and the creature respectively. In describing these relations we term man's side natural religion, and God's side providence, or His moral government. God sustains, feeds, governs; man looks up to heaven, and at least yearns to know and to hold converse with the Author of his being. This falls within the province of 'nature.' But God was not bound to dwarf His work down to these limits, as conversely He was under no obligation to grant man aught beyond them. He is free in creation; He is, as the Apostle represents Him, alike in Creation and in Providence, not less master of His handiwork than "the potter" who is moulding the unresisting clay [i]. He gives or He withholds His gifts; and His creatures have no claims upon Him, and no remedy against Him. None can question His right or His power, if He should will to add to the relations which first subsisted between Himself and His intelligent creature other relations distinct in kind and of a higher order.

The Gospel assures us that He has done so. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son . . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons [k]." This 'adoption' was indeed predestined in the Divine counsels from all eternity [l]. But the word 'adoption' describes a new relation to God, distinct from any in which human beings had actually stood to Him, between the fall of man and the Gospel dispensation. The Gospel, then, did not merely reveal a Divine Fatherhood, which had always existed, but which Christians were the first to recognize. It introduced a new filial relation, distinct in kind from any which had existed, or which could exist in a state of 'nature.' "As many as received" Jesus Christ "to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name; which

[i] Rom. ix. 21. [k] Gal. iv. 4. 5. [l] Eph. i. 5.

were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God[m]." Under the Gospel, God is not merely the awful Creator, the Almighty and Majestic ruler of the world. He is pre-eminently a tender Father; and He sheds upon His children the many tokens of a Father's love. He sets before the child of His adoption an inheritance worthy of so extraordinary and glorious a relationship, namely, the possession of Himself in a life of endless happiness. He endows His adopted child with new powers and new capacities, which are expressly designed to fit him for this new and magnificent destiny. And as He grants new powers and new rights, so He exacts new and corresponding duties. He illuminates the understanding and strengthens the will of His adopted son; He awaits the return of a faith and obedience which would have been impossible without such strength and illumination. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation (*καινὴ κτίσις*): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new[n]."

The relationship, grounded as it is on union with the Blessed and Only-begotten Son of God, this expectation of an eternal home, this gift of new capacities, of heavenly light and heavenly strength, this correlative power of faith and obedience in the Christian sense of the words, are all literally *above nature*. They are not included in its idea, or granted under the terms of its constitution; they together make up a *super*natural life. Some similar supernatural privileges were indeed given to man in Paradise; they were forfeited by the fall; they are more than restored[o] in Jesus Christ our Lord. But the Christian state of 'adoption' was no part of those original relations between God and His creature man which arose out of the fact of creation. Whether in Eden

[m] St. John i. 12, 13. [n] 2 Cor. v. 17. [o] Rom. v. 15.

or after Pentecost, it is superadded to those relations; it is intrinsically of a higher and distinct order; it is, in theological language and properly, *super*natural.

This point may be illustrated by the language of a divine to whom the Church of England has always looked with peculiar respect, and whose learning has been widely recognized on the Continent. The word supernatural is employed in the sense above stated by Bishop Bull, when in his discourse on "The State of Man before the Fall," he tells us that "at the creation man was endowed with certain supernatural gifts and powers, in which his perfection chiefly consisted, and without which his natural powers were of themselves insufficient to the attainment of a heavenly immortality [p];" and again, that "man being designed for a supernatural end," was "furnished by God with means proportioned thereto, i. e. with certain supernatural gifts and powers which we commonly call original righteousness [q]." And this is the strictest theological sense of the term, from which other senses more or less popular have been derived; senses for many of which theology is not in fairness to be considered responsible.

For instance, we sometimes hear men speak of mystery and the supernatural as if they were interchangeable terms. Whereas all that is mysterious is not supernatural, and much that is supernatural is not mysterious. Nature has her mysteries; she makes us aware of truths which are nevertheless shrouded from the direct gaze alike of the eye of sense and of the eye of reason. And grace has her simple and unmysterious discoveries of truths, which nevertheless are higher than nature and distinct from it. Nor can any yearnings or efforts of natural thought and feeling to break away from the bandages and associations of sense, be deemed, as such, supernatural. Natural forces may, upon occasion, rise above the average

p Works, Burton's ed. Oxf. 1846, vol. ii. p. 53. q Ibid. p. 60.

attainments of nature; and man's best efforts to compass the ideal in thought and feeling are amply recognized and provided for by philosophies which set out with a resolute denial of the existence of the supernatural. In point of fact nature includes the world of thought not less truly than the world of sense; while the supernatural lies beyond nature, whether it be mere sense or high intelligence. Again, it is assumed in ordinary language that miracle and the supernatural are names for the same thing. Whereas miracle is in any case only a small department of the supernatural. Perhaps it might be more correct to say that miracle is the proof of the existence of a supernatural world, rather than a part of it. Miracle is, strictly speaking, preternatural; it lies off the high road of nature; it impresses us by being at issue with what we observe of the laws and order of God's working in the natural world. But miracles might conceivably be wrought for merely natural ends, if God had opened with man no relations whatever that could properly be termed supernatural. Sometimes indeed men speak vaguely, as if every thing which excited the sense of wonder was really supernatural. Were this so, nature would be herself the supernatural. For nature is the school and mother of wonders. Our ignorance and our knowledge of the truths of natural science alike foster our sense of wonder[r]; they are equally independent of our real apprehension of the supernatural. The supernatural then cannot be simply identified with the wonderful, or the mysterious, or the miraculous elements of religion. That which constitutes the supernatural in the theological limitation of the term to man's

[r] "If ignorance is the cause of wonder, it is downright impossible that scientific explanation can ever take it away, since all which explanation does, in the final resort, is to refer us back to a prior inexplicable."—*Mr. J. S. Mill's Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 545.

dealings with God, is the introduction of a new set of relations between God and man, over and above those relations which arise immediately out of the original fact that man is the handiwork of God[s].

In short, the Apostle's expression, "risen with Christ," is another term for the supernatural. The fountain-head of the supernatural in the Christian life is the Incarnation of our Lord. "As our natural life," says Hooker, "consisteth in the union of the body with the soul; so our life supernatural in the union of the soul with God[t]." But how is this union to be effected? Hooker replies by sketching the outline of an argument, which from his day to our own has been ranked among the choicest masterpieces of English divinity. "Forasmuch," he says, "as there is no union of God with man without that Mean between both, Which is both, it seemeth requisite that we first consider how God is in Christ, then how Christ is in us, and how the sacraments do serve to make us partakers of Christ." It is of course conceivable that the virtue of the Incarnation might have been limited to the Incarnate Lord Himself. But in fact Christ reveals Himself as the living Centre, from Which the higher life radiates throughout regenerate humanity. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me[u]." Accordingly, "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life[x]." And we Christians "are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones[y]." "Christ in us" is "the hope of glory[z]." And since it is certain that "as many" infants

[s] On this subject see Préssensé, "Jésus Christ," p. 7: "Qui dit surnaturel suppose un ordre qui est en dehors et au dessus de la nature." Bushnell, "Nature and the Supernatural," pp. 16, 17, cap. 25. Félix, Conf. i. année 1865.

[t] Eccl. Pol. V. l. 3. [u] St. John xv. 4. [x] 1 St. John v. 12.
[y] Eph. v. 30. [z] Col. i. 27.

"as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ[a]," because in an infant there is nothing to resist the effectual and triumphant operation of grace; it follows that each of the baptized, who have not forfeited the Divine Gift by deadly sin, may say with the Apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me[b]."

When the Church of England refers to the Christian life or to Christian privileges, she consistently employs language which at the very least amounts to saying that the life of a Christian is altogether above nature, that it is *supernatural*. A baptized infant is, as such, in a "state of salvation[c]" until he forfeits it by wilful sin. Every child is taught "heartily" to "thank his heavenly Father for calling him into it, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." And surely to be "a very member incorporate of the mystical Body of God's Son[d];" to be "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven[e];" this is to be in a supernatural state. Surely to enjoy the high and awful privilege of "*so* eating the Flesh of God's dear Son Jesus Christ, and drinking His Blood, that our sinful bodies are made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood[f]," is to be within the range of a strictly supernatural means of approach to God. It is not necessary to insist upon this topic; no educated man who understands the meaning of language can doubt that the Prayer Book invariably takes the supernatural for granted. And the Prayer Book lies strictly within the sense of Scripture. Scripture in various ways again and again asserts the truth of our new relationship to God by virtue of our union with His Blessed Son. It does so nowhere more clearly than

[a] Gal. iii. 27. [b] Gal. ii. 20. [c] Church Catechism.
[d] Communion Service. [e] Church Catechism.
[f] Communion Service—Prayer of Access.

when the Apostle addresses the Colossians as "risen with Christ."

The lesson of the text often is not learnt; because the difficulty of learning it is a spiritual rather than an intellectual one. A person to whom I have already alluded, as seeing no meaning in St. Paul, was ultimately brought, by God's loving providence, to face the question of his eternal future, and to accept the great doctrines of grace. He then saw that you must live Scripture (if I may so speak) in order to understand it. For "the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God; and they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned[g]." Although baptized, this person had lapsed through sin into what was practically a state of unrenewed nature. Any of the regenerate may thus forfeit his higher life, if he be unfaithful to light and grace. In the case before us, conversion was brought about by a signal exercise of Divine mercy. And with the return to God, came the return of spiritual light. St. Paul was at once read and understood by a light which came not from the exercise of his natural powers (such light he had before), but from heaven.

To understand what it is to be "risen with Christ," a man must himself be leading the life of the spiritual resurrection. To enter into the contrast between life and death which the words imply, the soul's eye must in practice have measured the chasm which yawns between them. Mere criticism is utterly powerless when the question is one of spiritual appreciation. In its bearing upon the real meaning of the New Testament, textual criticism is to practical devotion, what the anatomy of the human body is to the manifold sensations, to the living feeling, to the incommunicable experience of life. If you

[g] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

can combine the exact knowledge which is won by anatomy with the experimental sense of life, so much the better. But no mere anatomy could convey an idea of the experienced sense of pain, or of nervousness, or of buoyant animal enjoyment. To form a true idea of these things, you must live them. Thus we may, to a great extent, measure the reality of our religious life, by the distinctness with which we perceive the drift and force of Scripture language. For the real Christian, such passages as our text do not merely describe a phase of feeling or a mode of thought which he looks at from without, and which he thinks or speaks of as having passed away. Such Scripture is a transcript of something which he sees within himself, which he feels and acknowledges, in the inmost sanctuary of his soul, and beneath the eye of his God.

"Risen with Christ!" The Apostle elsewhere expands the sense of his pregnant phrase. "We all," he says, "had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others[h]." This is the state of death. The description cannot apply to those who were baptized as infants, and who have, by God's mercy, preserved baptismal grace; but all really living souls throughout the Church must add; "God Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus[i]." What a picture is here of the majesty and glory and beauty of the Christian life! Is this resurrection side by side with Jesus imaginary? Is this picture of a soul crowned and throned in a heavenly court, as being already a companion of saints

[h] Eph. ii. 3. [i] Eph. ii. 4–6.

and angels, a mere mystic outline which for you has no attractions, nay which is to you unintelligible? Then let me beseech you to pray with the Apostle "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places[k]."

Why wonder that all around us Christians in the Church is supernatural, if it be thus a continuous exercise of the power which raised Jesus from the dead? Or that our Bible is essentially unlike all merely human books? Or that the Church, our mother and our home, is distinct in essence from the perishing polities and societies around it? Or that in the holy Sacraments we have the sources and supports of a life that nature could neither create nor sustain? Or that in Christian souls we behold graces of which nature is incapable; faith, hope, charity; charity of the deepest, tenderest kind towards God, and for God's sake, towards man; humility, purity, patience; a joy which no earthly pleasure could minister; a peace which passeth all understanding? For all that really quickens and strengthens the Christian soul is His work, Who raised Jesus from the grave. The Resurrection of our Lord is the measure of the risen life. The risen life is, in the mental and moral order of things, what the Resurrection is among the phenomena which are discerned by the senses. The reality of the moral fact before our eyes is bound up with the reality of its historical counterpart.

[k] Eph. i. 17—20.

If Christ's Resurrection be not a fact, then is Christianity false from the first and altogether, and its spiritual no less than its intellectual life is a delusion. If Christ's Resurrection be a fact—so certain that Christians would die to attest it—then the supernatural character of the Christian life around us corresponds with the strictly supernatural fact from which it dates its origin. And as we take the measure of the beauty, and power, and glory of this new and higher life which has been thus bountifully bestowed on men, what remains but to lift up heart and voice to God, and cry, "It is meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God"?

Yes! one thing else remains, to see that we are living as those who are "risen with Christ." This glorious life has manners, a temper, a bearing, a line of conduct, a code of honour peculiarly its own. The grace of God does not put force upon our wills: we are free to obey or to resist it. Therefore the Apostle adds, "Seek those things that are above." Surely, brethren, there is need for this warning; even when, as we trust, the light of heaven is already beaming on our understandings, and the love of God is already warming our hearts.

"Seek those things that are above." Seek, above all, assured communion with God, real work for God, frequent rest in the felt Presence of God, through and beyond all these, the final reward of the soul in God. Seek thus the supernatural. But seek also, if you will, that which is highest, purest, truest, noblest, even in the sphere of nature. As spiritual beauty is higher than strength and sharpness of intellect; so intellectual culture is nobler than mere development of muscle. Even bodily exercise is separated by a vast interval from aimless sloth. Body, intellect, spirit; each has its claims. Let the best come first in all schemes for laying out time and strength.

"Seek those things that are above." What a rule for conversation! All may do something to raise or to degrade it. The indirect allusion, the half-concealed innuendo, which stains the soul that speaks and the soul that willingly listens, is a cowardly thing that skulks away upon the least show of a brave resistance. Each may insist that conversation shall take and shall keep, at least in his presence, a high tone. We need not obtrude religion in quarters where to mention it will only provoke irreverence. Yet surely as Christians, we must bear ever in mind that we are risen with Christ. A few men who are simply determined to maintain a generous, pure, elevated standard of social intercourse, can affect most powerfully for good, if they cannot absolutely control, the character of thought in an entire society.

"Seek those things that are above!" What a rule in making friendships! How much, both for time and eternity, depends on the choice of one, whose thoughts shall mould or be moulded by our thought, whose affections shall be entwined with ours, whose will shall insensibly communicate something of its vigour or its weakness, its secret warp or its inflexible rectitude, to our will, as soul is pressed close to soul in the manifold intimacies of daily life! Are we then seeking a friend, because his name is to be found in the English Peerage, or because he will one day be master of so many thousands a year? Alas, indeed, for us, if these be our conceptions of "things above!" Or are we seeking to be the friend, not of rank and wealth, which will rightly suspect our advances, but of a mind and heart that can reciprocate and bless our friendship? Are we seeking to commune with some intelligence, with some soul, around which there plays already, at times, a ray of more than earthly beauty? This were indeed a friendship which becomes a life that is itself supernatural.

"Seek those things that are above!" What a motto for a library! Seek that which instructs rather than that which stimulates; that which braces, rather than that which is attractive; the exact science, rather than the vague mass of ill-assorted "views;" the poet who reveals human nature to itself, like Shakspeare, rather than the poet who flatters and fans sensual passion, like Byron. What a rule even for sacred studies! Yes, as you open your Bible, pray that you may seek those "things that are above." At the entrance of this temple of sacred Truth you are met by her handmaids, philology, history, geography. In the name of Truth they proffer their services, and they do well, for their services are indispensable. But woe to you, if, instead of leading you to their mistress, they detain you by their own inferior charms or by their own more noisy activities. Woe to you, if they persuade you to read the Book of Life as a Pagan might read it, as you yourselves might read Herodotus or Plato. Woe indeed to you, if, while fascinated by the polish of style, or by the power of language, or by the scenery of incident, or by the sequence of history, or by the flow of poetic fervour, you forget to dwell upon, nay to inquire for, the "things above." The Being and Nature of God, the nature and destiny of the soul, the nature and consequences of sin, the reality and working of Redemption, the Great Day of Award, the endless world which lies beyond the grave—such truths as these we should first and most earnestly seek in Scripture. And among the many blessings of the Church's guidance in the study of Scripture, it may not be deemed the least, that she *forces* us to look upwards. She saves us from the folly of dwelling exclusively on the external and the human side of things. She points to the leading truths, to the awful and consolatory revelations which will ever command the deepest and most lasting interest of the human soul.

"Seek those things that are above." What a solemn word to those who are deciding their line of work for life! Why not ask yourselves, brethren, what is really the highest and best work? Answer that question, not by what you know of the world's opinion, but by what you know of the Will of your God. If, for instance, you are hesitating between law and medicine, it must be admitted that modern English society seems to award a social premium to law. Yet surely the study of the framework of God's noblest earthly creature is a higher study than that of any system of human jurisprudence, dashed as every such system must be by human caprice, by human short-sightedness, by human error. Surely the practice of a profession, almost every activity of which is a fresh corporal work of mercy, must have an increasing attraction for those who, in the moral sense of the expression, seek "things above." Pardon me, brethren, if I speak too boldly in a matter on which there may fairly be difference of judgment; but I venture to hope—nay, to believe—that as public opinion becomes more Christian, a higher, nay, the very highest social consideration will be every where assigned to the members of that noble profession of medicine, which ministers with one hand to the progress of advancing science, while with the other it daily lavishes its countless deeds of unknown, unacknowledged generosity and kindness on the sick and suffering poor.

Does the text bid you seek Holy Orders? That question must be answered by every man in the sanctuary of his own soul. Alas for those who press to the steps of the sanctuary only that they may keep a fellowship or please a friend or a parent! Alas for those who bring to the service of the altar a sceptical intellect or an impure heart! These must earn for the Church of God a sure legacy of confusion and weakness, and for themselves, too

probably, a forfeiture of endless peace. Those whom God calls to His highest service, He draws onwards by many tokens of His grace and will: and they find, even here, that "the lines have fallen to them in a pleasant place, and that they have a goodly heritage." Nowhere else, among the various paths of life, are consolations so frequent and so pure to be met with;—nowhere else are hopes so bright vouchsafed to cheer the soul's darker hours;—nowhere else is the thought of death, with the endless Home and unfading crown beyond, so constant and so welcome as in the life of a conscientious clergyman.

But, above all, the precept is a rule for the regulation, for the employment of secret thought. Our Lord appeared after His Resurrection only at intervals. He manifested Himself here in the upper chamber, there on the mountain in Galilee, or to the wayside travellers, or on the shore of the northern lake. He vanished as He came; His disciples knew not at any moment whether the thin air might not yield before their eyes the outline of His glorious Form. They knew not whether, as He spake with them and blessed them, He might not forthwith melt away, veiling His Sacred Presence from the rude touch of sense. The Risen Life of Jesus was as a whole "hidden with God." And in this it is typical of the life of a Christian. Whether we will or no, the greater part of life is passed alone; and if we know any truth about ourselves at all, we know how much depends on the upward guidance of solitary thought! How piteous is the mental degradation and waste, of which again and again we have been guilty when walking or sitting alone, or during the still hours of a sleepless night! Why cannot we recall the stirring precept at these times of probation, and "Seek those things that are above"? Why should thought gravitate perpetually earthward, as if it were a senseless stone?

Why should it grovel habitually amid the petty ambitions, self-assertions, personalities, passions, lusts, which form the moral mire through which our souls have so often to drag heavily their anxious way? Why do we not insist at these seasons of providential opportunity, that thought *shall* rise upwards, and to heaven? Why not make an effort of strong purpose, that "whatsoever things are true, honest, pure, lovely, of good report," we *will* think of these things? A passage of Holy Scripture committed to memory; some sentence of a great author consecrated by the recognition of ages; some lines of an ancient hymn, or, if you will, of a modern one,—these may give wings to thought. But for your own sakes, brethren, for God's sake, let your thought rise. Bid it, force it to rise. Think of the Face of Jesus, of your future home in heaven, of those revered and loved ones who have gone before you, and who beckon you on towards them from their place of rest in Paradise. Think of all that has ever cheered, strengthened, quickened, braced yourselves. In such thoughts, to such thoughts, Jesus will assuredly and increasingly reveal Himself. As He reveals Himself, thought will take a new shape, it will melt insensibly into the incense of a prayer that shall greet His Presence.

And this aspiration of the soul mounting towards its Source and its Deliverer; this speechless language of faith, and hope, and love, bounding upwards towards the Everlasting Throne, and then prostrating themselves before it; these trustful, unformed, hesitating accents—the language of the child who is artlessly pouring his every grief and every joy into his Father's ear; these are the spirit, the essence of prayer, latent beneath the stately movement of ancient liturgies, living ever in the secret hearts of all the devoted children of the Church. Such prayer, in its Divinely imparted strength and confidence, is the very breath, the inmost movement of the super-

natural life. It is the voice of love seeking its most legitimate Object. The heart determines the gravitation of moral beings: and He Who possesses for the Christian heart a supreme and irresistible attraction, is in heaven. A true personal love of our Lord Jesus Christ makes the "seeking things above," a constant, a necessary reality. Without this love, all else that seems to be religious is hollow and vain. The love of Jesus consecrates and brings into a focus all earthly affection. It is the central feature, the controlling principle, the mainspring, the heart of a life which is risen from the grave of sin, and which is abidingly supernatural. It alone forms in us a real, personal, and practical religion; it alone generates the thoughts, the feelings, the mental and moral habits of a being who will have to live for ever in a higher and a better world. May God vouchsafe of His great mercy to shed it abroad more and more in our hearts! May He, at the last, when He beholds in us, not indeed our worthless merits, but His own most precious gifts, "be merciful to us and bless us, and show us the light of His Countenance, and be merciful unto us!"

SERMON XI.

OUR LORD'S ASCENSION THE CHURCH'S GAIN.

St. John xvi. 7.

It is expedient for you that I go away.

ON this great festival our Book of Common Prayer supplies us with a service which can hardly fail to engage the whole heart and interest of the devout worshipper. Every modification of the ordinary ritual of the Church that lends importance to Christmas or Whitsunday is exhibited to-day. We have proper Psalms, proper Lessons, a special Creed, Collect, Epistle and Gospel, and a proper Preface. If we except the opening anthem, Easter-Day itself enjoys no distinctions in our English Prayer Book which are refused to Ascension-Day. The compilers of the English Liturgy have evidently laboured to sustain the ancient dignity of this glorious festival, and to assert for the Ascension of our Lord in the public devotions of the Church that prominence which is given to it in the pages of Holy Scripture. Of the three inspired records of the event, the Gospel for the day gives that of St. Mark; the Epistle that of the Acts of the Apostles; the Second Lesson in the Morning Service that of St. Luke's Gospel. In the Morning Service the second ascent of the great Jewish Lawgiver into the Mount of God, followed by the separation of the tribe of Levi, foreshadows the greater

ascent of the Prophet of the New Covenant, issuing in the Pentecostal blessing and its abiding results [a]. At Even-song a more exact anticipation [b] of the Redeemer's triumph in the assumption of Elijah, whose mantle falls upon his attendant and disciple [c], is followed by the most emphatic reference to the consequences of the Ascension which is to be found in the Epistles of St. Paul [d]. The proper Psalms too, whether by their plain direct literal sense, or through the deeper mystical sense which underlies the letter, happily set forth the event of the day, together with its spiritual and historical consequences. David [e], when feeding his flock at night under an Eastern sky, "considers the heavens, the work of God's fingers;" he marvels that God should have been so mindful of man as to set all things in this beautiful world under his feet. But David is in reality chanting the praises of the Second Adam, as He returns to His throne "crowned with glory and honour [f]." After its long captivity, the sacred ark is at length being carried to the royal city; and the Psalmist-King, girded in a linen ephod, is tracing the moral likeness of the man who is meet to dwell in the tabernacle and to rest in the holy hill of Jehovah [g]. But the outline suggests an unearthly standard of perfection; the Psalmist is shadowing out the spotless purity of our Ascending Lord. Then follows a celebration [h] of Israel's victory over the combined hosts of Ammon and Syria. But the

[a] Deut. x.

[b] Yet in the narrative of the Ascension there is nothing parallel to the קְעָרָה by and in which the Prophet went up to heaven. The cloud only shrouded our Lord's Ascending Form from the gaze of His disciples (*ὑπέλαβεν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν*, Acts i. 9). For, as St. Gregory observes, "Redemptor noster non curru, non Angelis sublevatus legitur; quia Is Qui fecerat omnia, nimirum super omnia virtute Suâ ferebatur."—*S. Greg. Hom.* 29, *in Asc. Dom.*, Opp. i. 1572.

[c] 2 Kings ii. [d] Ephes. iv. 8–16. [e] In Ps. viii.

[f] Ps. viii. 5; compare Heb. ii. 5–9. [g] In Ps. xv.

[h] In Ps. xxi.

spiritual sense of the Church forthwith detects in the "blessings of goodness," and in the "crown of pure gold" set on the Conqueror's head, and in the "long life, even for ever and ever," the majesty of her Lord and Saviour, Who "has overcome the sharpness of death," and to Whom "all power is given in heaven and in earth[i]," and "Whose kingdom shall have no end." The gates of the city of the Great King[k] are bidden by the choirs of Israel on some religious festival to welcome the sacred ark and veiled presence of the Lord of Hosts. But Christian thought mounts forthwith to the eternal gates of heaven, and to the countless host of spirits that sweep around the Rising Form of the true "King of Glory;" and it accompanies the passage of that King, the everlasting Son of the Father, clothed with His Human Nature, into the Inaccessible Light[l]. After the victory over Sennacherib, a Hebrew poet[m] invites the Gentile world to see in Israel's Lord, not, as Pagans might dream, a mere national deity, but the great King over all the earth, "reigning over the heathen and sitting upon His holy seat." But *we* cannot forget that the "princes of the Gentile people" were never really "joined unto the people of the God of Abraham," until, on a greater day, and after a greater triumph, our God and Saviour had "gone up with a merry noise" and "with the sound of a trump" to heaven. If at a period of great national depression, two portions of earlier poems have been fused into one, as we find them at this day in Ps. cviii., the inspired combination exactly expresses on this festival the mind of the Christian Church. She "rejoices right early

[i] St. Matt. xxviii. 18.

[k] In Ps. xxiv.

[l] 1 Tim. vi. 16. Our Lord since His Ascension is ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν γενόμενος, Heb. vii. 26. So, ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, Eph. iv. 10. Contrast הַשָּׁמַיִם, 2 Kings ii. 11.

[m] In Ps. xlvii.

with lute and harp" for her Lord "set above the heavens," and "shedding His glory over all the earth;" and she reminds Him Who had promised "to go forth with her hosts," how Moab and Edom and Philistia, the heathen world that lies close around her borders, is still unsubdued to the banner of the Cross [n].

We may not linger here. Yet surely we have been kindled to-day by the voices of Hebrew Psalmists, or, as in the Collect and proper Preface, by the aspirations of Christian Fathers [o]; and this bustling world in which we live has possessed a diminished interest for us, as we have in heart and mind gone up in the track of the glorified Jesus, our Ascending Lord.

What mean we, let me ask, brethren, by this service? What has been our governing thought in offering it? Have we dwelt first and chiefly on the glory and majesty, the joy and gladness of our great Redeemer? Or have we been solely or mainly engaged with the blessings which He is winning for ourselves?

Selfishness is never less attractive than when it would leave its imprint on the sacred structure of Theology. Yet we are not unfrequently confronted by systems in which the assurance, or satisfaction, or consciousness of the believer is made the centre of a theological panorama, while the revealed Nature or economies of God are banished to its circumference. Thus, for example, the sense of acceptance demands a theory of justification;

[n] So generally Tholuck (Comment. in Ps.) for the historical references of the Proper Psalms for this day: very differently, of course, in some particulars, Ewald (Dichter des A. Bundes, Zw. Th.).

[o] The Collect occurs in the Gelasian, the Preface in the Gregorian Sacramentary. The Latin of the Preface seems to point to the age, if not to the authorship, of St. Leo. In A.D. 400 St. Augustine speaks of this festival as one of those "quæ toto terrarum orbe servantur," and suggests that it may have come down "ab ipsis Apostolis." Vol. ii. 125, ep. 54. Compare De Bapt. contr. Don., lib. iv. c. 24. n. 31.

the doctrine of justification requires a doctrine of the Atonement; the Atonement is insufficient unless the Victim be Divine; the Divinity of the Saviour necessitates the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, if it is to be held consistently with the primal truth of the Unity of God. It may be true enough that many a soul has been guided by the Divine mercy from a deep sense of personal misery to gaze upon the full Light of heaven. We are not, however, discussing the internal history of penitents or saints; but the principles upon which theological systems have been formed or taught. And it is plain that in this way the Self-sustaining, Infinite, Supreme Being comes to be regarded as only or chiefly interesting on account of the satisfaction which He yields to the subjective yearnings of a finite and created soul. From this it is not a long step to a habit of mind whereby the utterances of the holy Psalmist, the historic records of Hebrew inspiration, nay, the very Words and Acts of Christ, are patronizingly admired or contemptuously condemned. Scripture is accepted or disparaged, not on external grounds of authority and evidence, but in deference to the consciousness of that fallen humanity to which it is addressed as the message of the All-wise and the All-holy. In this way men may pass easily and rapidly through the so-termed 'phases' of an evanescent faith. Step by step the articles of the Creed of Christendom are resolved into unmeaning platitudes, or are explicitly denied. And at length the Everlasting Christ is dragged again before the judgment-seat of His creature. Again He is mocked and buffeted, and scourged and spat upon by some feeble intelligence, to which He Himself has given its acumen, nay its very existence [p].

You know, my brethren, that I am not sounding a

[p] Cf. Phases of Faith, c. vii., on "the Moral Perfection of Jesus."

false alarm or describing an imaginary process. Would, indeed, to God that it were so! You may see, if you will, in the circumstances of modern religious thought, the fullest justification of that eagerly objective character which belongs to Primitive Christianity. To the Apostolical Christian, the Being of God, the Natures and Person of Jesus Christ, the mysteries of His Human Life, and His seat at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high, are precious, for a higher reason than any which is merely personal. They open out to his soul the awful and serene beauty of that Existence, in the contemplation of Which he utterly forgets himself. "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee," not simply for Thy mercies to usward, but that Thou art what Thou art. We give thanks to Thee "for Thy great glory," *propter magnam gloriam Tuam.* We thank Thee that Thou art what Thou wouldest have been, if no created intelligence had known and loved Thee, and if Thou hadst lived on in the solitary majesty of Thy eternal years.—"We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory." And it is in this spirit that the true Christian first of all considers the mystery of his Lord's Ascension. "If ye loved Me," said our Lord, "ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto My Father[q]." Self would be forgotten in the sight of the glory of One Whom you love.

Such is, indeed, the true Christian temper, in the presence of this, as of all the mysteries of the Gospel. The manifested glory, the vindicated honour of Jesus Christ takes rank before all other considerations. At length that Life of humiliation is over; at length that bitter cup of suffering has been drained; at length that wasted Form is to become visibly "fairer than the children of men," and the Bridegroom of the Church is to "gird His sword upon His thigh, as becomes the

[q] St. John xiv. 28.

Most Mighty, and according to His worship and renown[r]." And so, in that last parting benediction, in that solemn measured upward movement[s], in that now glorious Form, shrouded from sight by a passing cloud, but still visible to Faith, as It moves onwards through trackless space, thronged by an escort of ministering spirits, the soul beholds a solemn act of reparation for the suffering Life which had preceded it, and rejoices with a joy which belongs to the highest sense of satisfied Justice. "He emptied Himself of His glory, and took on Him the form of a slave, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross;—*wherefore* also God hath highly exalted Him[t]."

We cannot say that this is all. We cannot pretend fully to determine wherein lay the especial fitness of the Ascension in its relation to the Person and Majesty of Christ. Such was the glory of His Body and His Soul after the Resurrection, that neither could become intrinsically more glorious[u]. But Heaven was His true abode, when He had once risen from His tomb. He lingered on earth only in condescension to the needs of His disciples. The Ascension was the completion of that majesty to which the Incarnate Being was from the first destined in the eternal counsels. And those counsels were fulfilled when He had placed Himself at that Right Hand, where "there are pleasures for evermore."

This, then, is our first tribute of love and duty to the mystery of to-day, and we may now turn to that other and very different point of view which is sanctioned by our Lord Himself in the text. "It is *expedient for you* that I go away."

r Ps. xlv. 3, 4.

s Ἀνεφέρετο. St. Luke xxiv. 51.

t Phil. ii. 7-9.

u S. Th. Aq., Summ. Th., pars 3, qu. 57, art 2.

No words that ever fell from the blessed Lips of Christ can have at first seemed to those faithful souls who heard them to verge more closely than these on the confines of paradox.

For let it be remembered that our Lord was speaking on the night before His Passion. He had now taught His followers the emptiness of all earthly aims. He had taught them to look to Himself alone for light and guidance, and help and strength. He had weaned their affections from business, from home, from relatives, from earthly cares; He had entwined those loving hearts closely, jealously around Himself. They did not indeed, even yet, fully know Him. But they clung to Him, all the more perseveringly, it may be, as clinging in the dark to One Who at least as yet had never failed them. To Him alone could they go; He certainly had the words of eternal life. How then can He assure them "It is expedient for you that I go away"? Could it be expedient for men who are still pilgrims upon earth that their Guide should be taken from them? Could it be expedient for pupils who are still ignorant of so much necessary truth, that their great Teacher should desert them? Could it be expedient for spiritual children, still so deficient in the practical realization of the Christian character, that they should be deprived of His visible Presence, Who taught by example even more persuasively than He taught by precept?

Συμφέρει ὑμῖν. He Himself says, It is expedient. He might have said "expedient" for the blessed spirits of the just made perfect, to whom, after overcoming the sharpness of death, He was about to open the kingdom of Heaven. He might have said, "expedient" for the blessed Angels who had for thirty-three years been "ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," and who had now higher ministries in store for them. He

might have said, "expedient" for Myself, Who, after finishing the work that was given Me to do, am to be glorified by the Father with that glory which I had with Him before the world was [x]. But He *does say*, "for you." My sorrowing, broken-hearted, despairing disciples, it is "expedient for you," that I, your Teacher, and Friend, and Guide, and Strength, should leave you in your weakness, in your wanderings, in your loneliness, in your ignorance. You have hitherto believed Me; trust Me now when I tell you, "It is expedient *for you* that I go away."

Wherein then, it may be asked, did this expediency lie? Why was it for the advantage of those whom our Lord had chosen out of the world [y], and whom He sent back into it as sheep in the midst of wolves [z], that He should leave them? How were they to be gainers by the departure of their Lord and Master, when they had hitherto been indebted to His visible presence, to His voice, to His companionship, for every spiritual blessing that they enjoyed? Why was it better for the Apostles and for us that the Incarnation of the Blessed Son of God should not be visibly perpetuated into Christian history? What then is this transcendent gift, more precious, as it seems, than the hearing and seeing with the eyes and looking upon and handling the very Word of Life [a]? What is this gift, so great that it can more than compensate for the loss of that intimate companionship with our Lord and Saviour which was enjoyed by His first followers? We cannot look this question too steadily in the face; for on the answer to it depends nothing less than our estimate of the true character of the Christian Dispensation.

I. It may, indeed, be said with much truth that there

[x] St. John xvii. 5.
[y] Ibid. xv. 19.
[z] St. Matt. x. 16.
[a] 1 St. John i. 1.

was a kind of natural expediency in the Ascension, grounded on that law of the human mind which makes the appreciation of present blessings so very difficult. Memory is perpetually endeavouring to atone, whether on a large or a small scale, for such past ingratitude. Most men look back with affection on the years of their childhood; and nations have always surrounded their early annals with an atmosphere of poetry. The Epicurean warns his friend against an anxiety for the future which might forfeit or diminish present enjoyment [b]. So limited are our powers in this present state of existence, that, generally speaking, observation must have ceased before reflection can begin to do its work. Jacob must awake from his sleep, before he can reflect, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place [c]!" He must wrestle all night with the Angel, and even ask his name, ere he calls the name of the place Peniel, or can understand that he has seen God face to face, and that his life is preserved [d]. It was only after the departure of the heavenly visitant, that Gideon became conscious of having seen an Angel of the Lord face to face [e]. And when the same awful being on another occasion had departed from Manoah, then and not before, "Manoah and his wife fell on their faces to the ground; and Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God [f]." At an earlier date, and at a more solemn moment Moses only saw the glory of God after it had passed him, and "made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped [g]."

Had Christ our Lord continued to live visibly upon the earth, the spiritual force of the Church might have been

[b] Hor. Od., I. ix. 13; II. xi. 4; III. xxix. 29; IV. xii. 25. Epod. xiii. 3, &c.

[c] Gen. xxviii. 16. [d] Ibid. xxxii. 30. [e] Judges vi. 22.

[f] Ibid. xiii. 22. [g] Exod. xxxiv. 8.

expended in an indefinitely prolonged observation. It was natural that He, the Light of the world, should rivet the gaze of those who beheld Him, too completely, to allow time and leisure for analysis, and comparison, and inference. The strength even of saintly souls might have been fatally overtaxed, if a moral miracle such as the Life of Jesus Christ had been perpetuated here below. If Jesus is to be seen by His creatures in His relative and awful greatness, He must be withdrawn. Even on the night before the Passion, St. Philip asks a question, which proves that he does not yet know, Who Jesus really is[h]. On the road to Emmaus, the eyes of the two disciples are holden that they should not know Him; and yet when He vanishes from their sight, they cannot but remember how their hearts had burned within them, as He talked to them by the way[i]! "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter[k]," was an announcement from His own Lips of the self-same principle. He was to be comprehended, when He was gone. Of how many mysteries of His life is it true that "these things understood not His disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him[l]." The Life of Christ on earth[m], which manifested the Essential Nature of the Father, had first to be brought to a close, ere it could be dropped as a seed that would spring up and bear fruit, into the heart of redeemed humanity. In the Gospels, after all, we possess only a fragment of the witnessed deeds, and of the uttered and remembered Words of Christ. If all had been recorded, the world itself, we are told, could not have contained the

[h] St. John xiv. 8. [i] St. Luke xxiv. 32. [k] St. John xiii. 7.
[l] St. John xii. 16.
[m] See the beautiful sermon "Christ manifested in remembrance" in Newman's Parochial Sermons, 4, 17.

books that should be written[n]. But those recorded Words and Acts of Christ have engaged the reflective powers of Christendom ever since. They are a mine which may still be worked without risk of exhaustion. They have been drawn out into literatures. They are the basis of institutions. They are the spirit of codes of law. They may have mingled with some earthly alloy, but they are to this day quick with heavenly virtue. And each representative teacher that has unfolded, and each authoritative assembly that has enforced their true essential meaning, has in adding, not to the stock of revealed truths, but to the illuminated thought of Christendom that surrounds them, attested the truth of our Master's words,—"It is expedient for you that I go away."

II. But further, startling as it may seem, it is nevertheless certain, that the life of the separate souls of the Apostles must have been quickened by the departure of their Lord. Faith, hope, and charity are the threefold cord that links the living spirit with its God. These graces were dwarfed or merely nascent in the Apostles before the Ascension of our Saviour. The belief of the Apostles did not as yet materially differ from the creed of the devout Jew. Their hopes were centred on the right hand and on the left of an earthly throne. Their charity, if it twined itself round their Lord at times with even passionate fervour, was yet discoloured by the presence of a subtle element of sense, which dimmed its spiritual lustre. Christ left them, leading captivity captive; telling them, that He would come again to receive them unto Himself; telling them, that He had gone to prepare a place for them; telling them, that it was His desire that where He is there should His servants be[o]. Like the deserted Elisha, they reach forward after Him as He

[n] St. John xxi. 25. [o] Ibid. xiv. 3.

passes away. They stretch forth their hands to Him; their soul crieth unto Him as a thirsty land[p]. And, behold, they find springing up within themselves a new and vigorous life. By leaving them, our Lord has made room for the full play and power of faith: faith now apprehends His Manhood as well as His Godhead. Faith, which only begins where sight ends, requires that its Great Object should leave the sphere of sense, ere it can perfectly lay hold on Him. Thus to Christians Faith is a second sight, which reveals Jesus crowned in heaven with glory and honour, and throned within the veil where His very presence is an intercession[q]. To faith He is no mere bright record of the past, although it were traced on the most sacred page of history. Still less is He an ideal of humanity that never was realized before the eye of sense. For faith holds daily communion with Him, as with a Person, as with a vast all-comprehending Intellect, as with a resistless Will, as with a living Heart of surpassing tenderness. "Whom not having seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory[r]." Hope, too, rivals in its growth, the growth of faith. It dwells no longer on any restoration of an earthly kingdom to Israel. It reaches forth into an eternal future. It follows in the track of Jesus; it gazes only in that one direction; it addresses itself to supernatural objects. The Apostles henceforth look forward to the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the times of refreshing, and to the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge should give them, and to the seeing Him as He is[s]. The mansions of the Father's House, the eternal fellowship of the Saints, the endless vision of God,—these were the ambitions of their later life. These were the fastenings of their hope, which

[p] Ps. cxliii. 6. [q] Heb. ii. 9; vii. 25. [r] 1 St. Peter i. 8.
[s] 1 Thess. i. 10; ii. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8. 1 St. John iii. 2.

sure and stedfast, like an anchor, was lodged within that veil whither their Forerunner was for them entered[t]. And that earthly love of Him which attached itself to His earthly relations towards them, to the precise outward circumstances which surrounded His manifestation in the flesh, how has it been purified by His departure! According to St. Augustine, this carnal knowledge of Christ our Lord was the subjective cause which delayed the descent of the Holy Ghost until after the Ascension[u]. To know Christ after the flesh was incompatible with the higher knowledge of the life of faith; and therefore it was expedient that He should go away. For when the treasure of Christians had gone to heaven, the Christian heart would follow[x]. When Christ was seated at the right hand of God, love, as a matter of course, would seek simply and constantly those things that are above, and not the things upon the earth[y]. And thus, historically speaking, it is true not merely of the Passion, but of the Ascension of our Saviour, that when lifted up from the earth, He drew men unto Him[z]. He drew their intellects, their wills, their affections, their imaginations, their aims, and hopes, and anticipations, and sympathies up from this earthly scene towards Himself. He actually quickened and enlarged their capacities for work and for suffering here on earth, by transferring their deepest interests, along with His own glorious Person, to the courts of heaven.

III. But, if the Apostles had been altogether left to their own resources by their ascending Lord, could they have formed so true, so wonderful an estimate of the bearings and proportions of His Life, as by their writings to rule the thought and kindle the enthusiasm of all the ages of

[t] Heb. vi. 19. [u] S. Aug., Tr. 94, in S. Joan.
[x] St. Matt. vi. 21. [y] Col. iii. 1, 2. [z] St. John xii. 32.

Christendom? Were the faith, the hope, the love, which gave to their lives the beauty and the force of heroism, thrown out, as plants of native growth, from the rich soil of their natural hearts? Are the Epistles of St. Paul, or is the character of St. John, to be explained by any searching analysis of their natural gifts, of their educational antecedents, of their external contact with the manifested Redeemer, of the successive circumstances and directions of their lives? Surely not. Even though the Pentecostal miracle had not been recorded, some supernatural interference *must* have been assumed, in order seriously to account for the moral transformation of the Apostolical character, and for the intellectual range of the Apostolical writings. *Of itself* the departure of our risen Lord would neither have permanently illuminated the reflections of the Church, nor yet have quickened the graces of its separate members. But He left this earth in His bodily form, to return as a Quickening Spirit, present in force and virtue, before He comes to be present in judgment. He ascended up on high to obtain gifts for men[a]; and having received of the Father, as the bounteous firstfruits of His opening and omnipotent intercession, the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed upon the earth those wondrous gifts which the first Christians saw and heard[b]. With the Apostles we must wait until Pentecost, if we would enter into the full expediency of the Ascension.

And yet, in that great discourse, one sentence of which is under consideration, and which was not given in writing to the Christian world upon the authority of St. John, until a lapse of nearly three-quarters of a century had realized in experience its every promise, we read beforehand, and in the Words of Jesus, why it was expedient that He should go away. It was not merely that He might prepare a place for His disciples, and then

[a] Ephes. iv. 8. Ps. lxviii. 18. [b] Acts ii. 33.

come again and receive them unto Himself[c]. It was because, as He says, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you[d]." The whole action of the Spirit upon the intellect, and affections, and inmost character of the Christian, as well as His felt Presence and power in forming, enlightening, guiding, governing, and sanctifying the Church, must have become a lengthened justification of their Master's Ascension, in the eyes of the Apostles. If the Apostles are to be guided into all truth, if they are to be shown things to come, if they are to be taught all things, and if all the blessed words of Christ, whatsoever He said to them, are to be brought home with literal accuracy to their remembrance, it is expedient that their Lord should go[e]. If they are to do greater works than the works of Christ, it is "because I go to My Father[f]." If dauntless missionaries of the Cross are to bear witness of their Lord to a sinful and perishing world; it can only be because the Comforter, sent from the Father by the ascended Saviour, witnesses through their weakness to the strength and glory of their Lord[g]. If the world is to be convinced of the sin of its own unbelief, or of the righteousness of the all-holy Redeemer; such conviction is to be a consequence of Christ's going to the Father and being seen no more[h]. Pass the eye over that last great discourse, and mark how it bears with repeated effort and significance upon the statement of the text, that the Ascension was expedient for the Apostles, expedient for the Christian Church.

But why did these supernatural blessings, which justified the Ascension, thus absolutely depend on it? Why should there exist so strict a connexion between the departure of

[c] St. John xiv. 3.
[d] Ibid. xvi. 7; xiv. 16.
[e] Ibid. xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 13.
[f] Ibid. xiv. 12.
[g] Ibid. xv. 26, 27.
[h] Ibid. xvi. 7–10.

our Lord and the coming of His Spirit? Was it that the glorious Intercession of Christ in heaven was to be a main topic of consolation, whispered by the Spirit's teaching to the heart of the bereaved Church? Was it that the continued presence of our Lord in the Flesh might have stimulated earthly yearnings towards Him more or less inconsistent with that profound appreciation of His work and of His Person which the Spirit would dictate? Was it that the victory must be *perfectly* won, ere the gifts for men which the Conqueror receives can be dispensed in their fulness from on high? Or must the mighty power of Christ's Intercession in Heaven be revealed to Christians by the magnificence of its first result? or may not the heavenly Artist descend to reproduce the image of Christ in the conscience and heart of humanity until the Divine Original has been completed? All such suggestions do but approach that fuller answer to the question which is probably hidden in the depths of Godhead—undisclosed and inaccessible even to faith. For if the descent of the Spirit depends on mission from the Son as well as from the Father, St. Augustine reminds us that the Son, "non sic venerat a Patre, ut non maneret in Patre[i]." If it depends on His Intercession, He interceded while yet on earth for the unity of His followers; for their sanctification through the truth; for their being with Him where all along in His Godhead He was, that they might behold His glory[k]; for those very results, in short, which were to be due to the Pentecostal gift. Must we not conclude that while it is doubtful whether the connexion in question depends on a providential and free disposition on the part of God, forming part of the economy of man's Redemption, or on some internal law of the Divine Life, some relation between the Persons of the Godhead, the sacredness of which forbids further speculation, however

[i] S. Aug., Tr. 94, in Joan., ubi sup.

[k] St. John xvii. 11, 17, 24.

reverent, it is in any case certain that such a connexion was necessary? For the Only-begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father[l], to Whom we owe all that we know concerning God, has attested its necessity. "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."

Before the Pentecostal Shower descended on the Church there were drops which heralded Its approach. What else were those burning hearts of the two disciples on the Emmaus road[m], and that opening of their understanding to the true sense of the prophetical Scriptures[n]? what else that solemn bestowal of the apostolical commission, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost[o]," even though He was then given as the warrant and author of a ministerial faculty rather than as the inward guest of souls? what else that "great joy" with which, as on this day, the bereaved eleven returned to Jerusalem[p]? Still, for ten days—weary and anxious days they must have been, though passed in retreat, in prayer, in intercession,—the expected Blessing in its fulness was withheld. For ten days the Apostles were denied the crowning proof of the expediency of their Lord's departure. Our faith has never been submitted to the ordeal of so agonizing a suspense. We live in that Holy Home upon which, shadowed out by the tongues of fire and the wind, the Spirit descended more than eighteen hundred years ago. The Lord is our Shepherd: He feeds us in the green pastures of the Church[q]; He still "watereth her furrows, and sendeth rain into the little valleys thereof, and maketh them fat with the drops of rain, and blesseth the increase of it[r]."

Do we appreciate our real place in the universe of God? Do we understand what it is, not to have found the soul's

l St. John i. 18. m St. Luke xxiv. 32. n Ibid. xxiv. 45.
o St. John xx. 22. p St. Luke xxiv. 52. q Ps. xxiii. 1, 2.
r Ps. lxv. 10.

true home at the cost of the toil and pain of years, but as infants to have been brought to "Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and Church of the first-born," and to that cleansing 'Blood' with Which every thing around us is sprinkled[s]? Are our eyes opened, so that we can see the chariots of fire and horses of fire round about the Mountain[t]? is the horizon of our spiritual vision not really so bounded by sense and time, as to disqualify us for entering into the reasons for that high and blessed expediency of which our Lord speaks to His sorrowing followers?

Believe it, dear brethren, while Christ our Lord tarried here in the flesh, His Apostles who saw and conversed with Him, who walked by His side, who rested at His feet, who lay in His breast, were further, immeasurably further from Him than we may be, if we will. To them He was still an external example, an external voice, an external force. Christ *in us* is the hope of glory[u]. Our ascended Lord has sent down upon us that promised and gracious Friend, Whose office it is to unite us to Himself. Therefore, by faith and love directed upon the known channels of His Presence, man may renounce in a sense his own sinful individuality, and be clothed with the Sanctity and Perfection of His Saviour[x]. Therefore, united to Christ, man is no longer what he was in the state of nature, an isolated unit; he is a member of that spiritual organization which is Christ's Body, and his life has already commingled with that higher life which flows from the Head and Heart of the redeemed Church[y]. Therefore the Saviour lives in His Church; He lives in us; Therefore Sacraments have grace and virtue[z]; and prayer

s Heb. xii. 22, 23; ix. 19-23.
t 2 Kings vi. 17.
u Col. i. 27.
x Gal. ii. 20.
y Eph. v. 30.
z St. John vi. 56 58. Gal. iii. 27.

is co-operation with the Perpetual Intercession of our Lord. He intercedes[a], and we pray. He claims the Divine Compassion, and we recommend each other to the Mercy of the great Creator[b]. He offers Himself as the one Sacrifice for sins[c], and lo! we desire God's "fatherly goodness mercifully to accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, most humbly beseeching Him to grant that we and all His whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of our Saviour's passion[d]." If we feel the expediency of the Ascension, we are men of prayer. "In heart and mind" we "ascend thither" where prayer is not an effort but an atmosphere. We know by blessed experience that prayer in the Church of God is not the voice of slaves who cringe in terror before a tyrant-lord; that it is not the petition of mercenaries, of whose service the highest aim is to add to what they have. Rather is it the instinctive breathing of an informing Spirit, the voice of children who without doubt or questioning throw themselves into their Father's arms[e], since they are conformed to the image of His Blessed Son Jesus Christ the Righteous. For indeed prayer is the life-blood of the Church. We Christians pray because, if we live spiritually, we cannot but pray[f]. We are carried forward by an unseen force which fills the Holy House where we are sitting[g]. And this torrent of prayer, this pleading of all for each and of each for all, this mutual service perpetually sought and as perpetually rendered, this onward upward movement of souls, at once in supplication and in thanksgiving presenting themselves as brethren of Christ our Saviour before the Throne of our Father and our God; this con-

[a] Heb. vii. 25.
[b] 2 Tim. i. 3. 1 Thes. i. 2; iii. 10.
[c] Heb. viii. 3; ix. 14.
[d] Communion Service.
[e] Gal. iv. 6. Rom. v. 5; viii. 15–17.
[f] 1 Thess. v. 17. Rom. xii. 12. Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 7.
[g] Acts ii. 2.

tinuous spiritual activity is the fresh warm blood that circulates through the arteries of the Church; it is both its deepest life and the expression of that life; it is the voice of its adoring love; it is the ceaseless sigh of the everlasting Spirit within it.

Can we realize, each one for himself, what is involved in this expediency of our Lord's Ascension? Not if we imagine that we can appropriate His divine teaching by the mere exertion of our natural faculties, and that we owe little or nothing to His solemn voice as it speaks to each one of us in the recesses of conscience, and as it echoes along the records of the Undivided Church. Not if we propose to ourselves deliberately and upon theory a moral standard which is lower and less than that of the Great Teacher. Not if we forget the sharp distinction which exists, and which will exist for ever, between the very highest, noblest, purest, truest efforts of nature, and the heavenly action of the Spirit of Grace. Not if we are giving up the evangelical graces of faith, and hope, and charity, and joy, and peace, and longsuffering; while we are falling back upon what are merely the highest products of the unsanctified heart, manliness, and temperance, and common sense, and justice, and perseverance, and amiability, and integrity. Not if we thus content ourselves with virtues which paganism might have taught us, although the Son of God had never become Incarnate and had never suffered on the Cross. We shall never understand the expediency of the Ascension, if we forget that we are the subjects of a Spiritual Dispensation, in which forces more extraordinary are at work, and results more wonderful are produced than any which fall under the cognizance of sense[h]. For us, this blessed day will have no real meaning, if, now that our Lord is so very near us, we neglect to claim and to deepen our communion

[h] 1 Cor. ii. 7–9.

with Him in common prayer and in frequent Sacraments[i]; if we are altogether unlike that holy company, which, when their Lord had gone from their sight, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God[k].

And there are in this place peculiar temptations to an exaggerated sympathy with mere natural excellence, and as our finite minds must generally have it so, to a corresponding depreciation of grace. As is the aspect of the renewed earth at this season of the year, such is human life for the most part all the year round, within the precincts of a University. Here youth and strength are always in the ascendant; few have time to grow sick, or weak, or old. A generation is superseded before it has lost its bloom; and our constant changes perpetuate the illusion; they maintain the freshness of a perpetual spring. Thus we live with those who are no fair sample of the average weakness and sufferings of mankind. We live among men at the very prime of life, when mind and body rival each other in the putting forth and development of new energies and of unsuspected force. We are carried away with the current of natural vigour thus poured around us; we heed not that other side of the picture which one English poet of the last age, as he mused over another noble home of education, has so touchingly remembered. We see not, we only hear from others of that which so often follows when residence here has ended. We forget the early sicknesses, the early deaths, the blighted hopes, the heart-aches, the graver anxieties of later life. We know little of those most bitter sorrows which are caused by the sorrows of those whom we love. We dream not of the blessed and stern experiences which are meant to send all, and which, by God's grace, do send many, in utter earnest to the

[i] Heb. x. 25. Acts ii. 42. Jude 19. [k] St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53.

foot of the Cross. Yet to recognize a danger is to be on the road to escape it.

Nature indeed may well be beautiful, since she too is the handiwork of God. But we do not deny this, because we trace on her forehead the brand of a superinduced corruption, and proclaim the distinctness and superiority of grace.

The Ascension reminds us of a Life which is higher than this world, and than that which belongs to it. So much higher, so much more blessed and glorious is the life of grace, that One Who loved us men with the truest and purest affection, yet withdrew Himself, as on this day, from our sight, in order to enable us, if we will, to live it.

Brethren, let us lift up our hearts, let us lift them up unto our ascended Lord. Let us put from us the whisper of those who only live in and for what they see, and who tells us that the Divine life which strikes higher and deeper than the life of sense is visionary, unpractical, superstitious. A life "hidden with Christ[l]" is blessed beyond all words in the manifold proofs of its intrinsic power and of the tender enduring compassion of our Saviour. Let us mark and seek the generation of them that seek Him[m]; let us, if we would be lightened, have an eye unto Him Who is the True Light[n]. He ever lives, now as on the morrow of His triumph; He lives in the city of the saints, the Lamb Throned and Omnipotent[o]. Let us "in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell." Let us continually, while we tarry here, pierce the veil by prayer, and behold His Presence in righteousness; that hereafter we may wake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it[p].

[l] Col. iii. 3. [m] Ps. xxiv. 6. [n] St. John i. 9.
[o] Rev. v. 6. [p] Ps. xvii. 15.

SERMON XII.

FAITH IN A HOLY GHOST.

Acts xix. 1, 2.

Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

THIS singular incident is remarkable, as showing that in the apostolical age, as now, there were persons, and bodies of persons, in possession of fragments of Revealed Truth, and yet entirely ignorant of some of its most vital elements. The "disciples," whom St. Paul found at Ephesus, must have acknowledged a certain relation to Jesus Christ as their Master, or the name "disciples" would not have been given them. From the circumstance of their having received St. John's baptism, it might be argued with much seeming probability that they were originally Jews; but their entire ignorance of the existence of the Holy Ghost is irreconcilable with that supposition. For the Old Testament, both in its historical and in its prophetical books, alludes so often and so emphatically to the work of the Holy Spirit, that no Jew could possibly have been in the condition of not having so much as heard of His existence, although doubtless His Divine Personality had not been revealed to the Jewish Church. It may, indeed, be urged, that

this would apply equally to any disciples of the Baptist, since St. John had foretold One Who would baptize His people "with the Holy Ghost and with fire[a]." But it is not to be supposed that these disciples at Ephesus had actually listened to the Baptist himself. They were probably heathens, who had been longing for something higher and better than the established idolatries of Ephesus could supply. In this frame of mind they had fallen in with Jews, who had told them of the Syrian preacher of repentance, and of his symbolical baptism. It is improbable that these Jews would have repeated all the features of St. John's teaching which we at this day gather from the Evangelists. Thus, then, these disciples would have found a measure of real satisfaction; and since St. John's baptism, as well as his whole teaching, was simply anticipatory of the work of the Redeemer, they would have arrived at a partial and indistinct knowledge of Jesus Christ. Jesus was in some sense their Master; they were His disciples. Still they had not heard of the existence of the Holy Ghost. The reference to the Holy Ghost which St. John's teaching and baptism involved, might easily have fallen into the background, and have been lost sight of in the hands of his disciples; and it would have corresponded to nothing previously existing in heathen thought. But an interesting question may be raised as to the motive which led St. Paul to question professed Christians on a point which he might have naturally taken for granted. We are not told that the Apostle detected the grave hiatus in the faith of these disciples by any supernatural insight. Nor is there any sufficient ground for the opinion that St. Paul expected and did not find a manifestation of those extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost which were frequent in the Apostolical age. At least St. Luke gives us no

[a] St. Matt. iii. 2.

instance of the presence of any such gifts among the Gentiles converted by St. Paul. It is probable, as Meyer has pointed out, that the absence of some practice specifically befitting Christian faith astonished St. Paul, and led him to question the disciples as to their spiritual knowledge and condition. So upon discovering the real state of their case, St. Paul proceeds to lead on these partially-instructed disciples, from the fragment of truth which they actually admitted, to truth of which they were still ignorant. He reminds them that St. John's baptism was only "with water." That is, it was a sign addressed to the imagination; it was not, like a Christian sacrament, an outward and visible sign of an accompanying inward and spiritual grace. It only pointed on to Christ; it did not carry with it the gift of Christ's Nature. Therefore Christ's baptism was destined to supersede it. These twelve disciples of Ephesus were not wanting in religious faith or earnestness, but only in necessary instruction. They at once acted upon the Apostle's advice; and after being baptized and confirmed, they were favoured with some miraculous tokens of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. "The Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied [b]."

The condition of "not having so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," is not, I fear, literally impossible in England at the present day. In our great cities there are multitudes to whom the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in Christian humanity is as utterly unknown as any of the most abstruse truths of physical science. There are multitudes who have not even heard that the gracious Author of our new life in Christ is asserted to exist. But there are also sections of the educated world to whom the words apply, if not in their literal sense, yet by implication, and practically. No

[b] Acts xix. 6.

educated man, indeed, who as such is interested in Christianity as a great intellectual and moral system, which as a matter of fact controls the thoughts and conduct of millions of human beings, can fail to make himself acquainted with its more prominent features. Among these, he encounters the Church doctrine respecting the Person and work of the Holy Ghost. But this intellectual appreciation of an integral feature of the Christian faith, may, or may not, go along with a belief in its absolute and most significant truth. To have heard that there is a Holy Ghost to any practical purpose, is to have accepted certain lines of thought, and still more to be aiming at a moral and spiritual ideal. But here it is desirable to go into detail; and, therefore, without further preamble, let us proceed to note certain intellectual and moral results of a living belief in His gracious presence and energy, Whom the Church of God celebrates to-day.

1. It may, then, seem a poor and trite thing to say, but real belief in the Holy Ghost implies an habitual sense of the reality of a spiritual and supersensuous world. There is in fallen human nature a constant and profound tendency to sink under the dominion of materialistic habits of thought, that is to say, to surrender ourselves to the fascination and so to the empire of the senses. I do not now speak of formal materialistic systems, in which the conception of spirit is banished from human thought by the decree of some pretentious theory, which denies that there are any ultimate constituents of being except matter and force. Materialism, considered as a formal doctrine, enjoys, at least in England, only a limited range of empire. English people do not like its look; since, apart from its irreligion, it has a traditional tendency to become pedantic. But materialism is not always Positivism, devising a ritual for its 'sacraments' of nature and humanity. It comes among us in an easy,

unofficial guise. If it is generally on parade across the Channel, it mixes with ourselves in undress, and with the popular manners of a civilian. It avoids technicalities; it relieves itself of the difficulties and responsibilities of theory; it repudiates highly organized forms of thought; it is, perhaps, content to be represented only as "a tendency," a "point of view," a "way of looking at things." Whatever it may be or do elsewhere, it comes to us English people with an adroit appeal to the characteristic upon which we are wont to pride ourselves. It takes us by the arm, and, as if feeling its way to our more accessible sympathies, it delicately congratulates us on our common sense. We are told that we are too sensible a race to run distractedly after the metaphysical and theological phantoms which are so attractive to men of southern or oriental blood. It is our pride and glory to keep to that which is really within our grasp. Perhaps at this point materialism makes bold to furnish us, as if incidentally, in some popular treatise on logic, with a doctrine of the categories which leaves no room for God, and with a theory of human action which, without denying free will in terms, practically sets it aside as a speculative chimera. "Go on your way," it whispers to us English, "O most practical among the peoples of the earth! Have done with the theological toys which amused you in the nursery of your mental civilization. Vex not your thought with the consideration of problems which have wearied the human soul, for so many centuries, to no real purpose. Believe in your senses; believe in what you see, and eat, and feel, and smell. Subdue the elements of the visible world; study their laws, their uses, their combinations; make matter more and more entirely your slave. Organize the social system, under which man passes his brief existence, so as to better man's estate materially. Here, here only, progress is possible. To seek happiness else-

where is only to build upon the quicksand of venerable illusions, and to lose your time."

This is the language of materialism, more or less disguised. The strength of the doctrine lies in the fact, that it puts into form and words the thought of a great number of human beings, in all generations, but especially in our own. Whether materialism is contemptuously cynical, or gravely earnest, its bearing towards the idea of an invisible world is unmistakable. It is not merely formal materialism which is here in question; but practical, untheoretical, popular, perhaps unacknowledged, unrecognized, unsuspected materialism. This materialism speaks not in dry, formal, repulsive treatises, but in popular journals, and in general conversation. Let us listen to it, as on Easter Eve, in this present year of grace, it is congratulating itself upon the decrease, as it imagines, of religious observances in the present day. "The thoughts of men," it says, "on all important subjects, their legislation, their amusements, their very language, and the regulation of their daily habits of life, are continually growing to be less and less influenced by definite religious doctrines. They are continually tending to become more and more things of this world and this life. To many persons," the writer continues, with philosophical *sang froid*, "this is the greatest and most interesting of all contemporary phenomena[c]."

Whether this assertion be or be not borne out by facts, it is plain that the writer records it with satisfaction, as indicating movement in the right direction; and further, that he calculates upon a large amount of sympathy in the educated classes who read him. But no Christian, I venture to think, can regard his statement with other feelings than those of keen distress; distress that it should be advanced at all; distress yet greater, if it

[c] *Pall Mall Gazette*, April 20, 1867.

should prove to have been advanced justifiably. For the question at bottom is, whether we know any thing at all about a God, and a spiritual world, or not. If not, then the state of things upon which this writer congratulates himself and his readers is, undoubtedly, as far as it goes, matter for congratulation; only perhaps, as honest and consistent men, we might wish that the relics of old creeds, and of the institutions which presuppose their serious truth, could be swept into oblivion a little more rapidly than is at present likely to be the case. If, however, Christians are right in supposing that a vast body of certain truth about God and the invisible world is in our possession; then I say that, supposing this writer to be well-informed, we have, as a nation, as a Church, as individuals, the deepest reasons for self-humiliation and repentance. In particular, how is it possible, that any belief at all in the presence and activity of God's Holy Spirit, can co-exist with satisfaction at an increasing insensibility to the claims of the Unseen? Surely this popular, untheoretic, yet most real materialism is radically inconsistent with any recognition whatever of the great truth which is before the mind of the Church of Christ on this high festival. *Credo in Spiritum Sanctum:* "I believe in the Holy Ghost." What does that involve? If words mean any thing, if I have any sort of belief in the self-consistency of truth, it involves at least *this:* that I believe in the existence of a supersensuous world, within and upon which the Divine Spirit lives and acts. This belief is, indeed, very far short of the statement of the Nicene Creed; it is only that amount of spiritual truth which is common to the Church of Christ with Sabellians and Socinians. The Socinian, who believes that the Eternal Spirit is only a name for the Divine Influence, and the Sabellian, who acknowledges in Him only a phase or manifestation of the Godhead, both admit the strictly

supernatural phenomenon of God's spiritual action upon our spirits, as distinctly as do we of the Church, who recognize in the Holy Ghost a Personal Subsistence, internal to the Everlasting Being of God, and as such entitled to that special adoration which we pay Him at the beginning of our Litany, in our Ordination Service, and in our use of the *Gloria Patri*. Certainly, belief in the existence of spirit at all carries with it as great a weight of mystery, carries us as completely beyond the precincts of sense, and right into the heart of the world invisible, as does any portion of revealed truth. What in Himself the Eternal Spirit is, who shall say? We can, perhaps, arrive at no nearer conception of a spiritual substance at all, than is furnished by the crude and negative idea of highly attenuated matter. And how spirit acts on spirit; how the Divine and Infinite Spirit acts on our human spirit; how He penetrates it, lightens it, warms it, strengthens it: this is and must for ever remain, here below, within the province of high and unsolved mystery. But to admit it at all, is to deny with the utmost emphasis the premises of a great deal of popular writing and popular conversation at the present day, which may not mean to be, but which certainly is, simple and downright materialism.

You may reply, that this practical materialism is not refuted when its antagonism to belief in God's Living Spirit has been insisted on. No: for theoretical materialists, I admit, it is not refuted. Nor do the limits of this sermon admit of my dwelling on that long array of cogent considerations, by which the advocates of spiritualistic truth, both within and without the Christian pale, have disputed the ground inch by inch with the apostles of materialism. Yet we may pause to observe in passing, that civilization itself, which we are told is to advance in an inverse ratio to man's belief in the Invisible,—civiliza-

tion itself obliges us to resist the advance of materialism. Who were the founders of modern civilization? I answer, men who believed in the Invisible. And upon what does civilization really repose? Not upon our conquests in the world of matter, which may merely add to our capacities for extraordinary brutality in generations to come; but upon the prevalence of moral *ideas*—of the idea of duty, of the idea of justice, of the idea of conscience. Do we then see these ideas? can we handle them? can we cut them up with knives, or shape them with hammers, or measure them with a rood, or label specimens of them on the shelf of a museum? No; they are, you say, abstract forms of our thought. Certainly they are; in other words, they are products of the supersensuous world; they altogether belong to it, although in the concrete they exercise such energetic jurisdiction in the world of sense as to form the very foundations of our social fabric. These powerful and creative ideas are just as much out of the reach of sense as is the action of the Holy Spirit of God upon a human soul; we see the ideas as we see that action, only in their effects, not in themselves. A really consistent materialism has before now made war upon these ideas as superstitious, and would have inaugurated pure barbarism if it could have succeeded in destroying them. Certainly to insist upon the antagonism between belief in a spiritual world and prevalent materialistic notions, is not to have thereby convinced the materialists of their error. But it is to have done something towards clearing the intellectual atmosphere, and that is of prime necessity in the present circumstances of modern thought. You may hear the same man talk materialism one minute, and at another speak as if the spiritual agency of God were really not out of the question. In truth we are fighting in a fog, or in a wood, where the armies have lost sight of their relative positions, and where even loyal soldiers have

sometimes donned the enemy's uniform. But those who believe only in the philosophy of the senses are year by year taking up, with more and more of fatal consistency, the line which alone is their true one. Would that those who recognize a spiritual world—still more that believers in the supernatural—could see what these beliefs really involve, and could detach themselves from forms of thought which are, whether avowedly so or no, yet really and vitally at issue with their dearest convictions! Depend upon it, my brethren, that whether we join in the Apostles' Creed or not, if our real inmost thought is shaped by the so-called philosophy of experience, we have really taken up a position which only differs from that of the Ephesine disciples in this;—that while we cannot plead honest ignorance, it has ceased to be a matter of any practical consequence to us whatever, whether there be or be not any Holy Ghost.

Surely, if one thing is certain about Christianity, it is that Christianity is an appeal from the visible to the Invisible. Christianity is ever drawing us away from the importunity of sense to the presence and action of the Eternal Spirit. Nay more; Christianity pre-supposes a spiritual world of which nature and the better philosophy are cognizant; and then it proclaims the introduction within this world of a higher power and principle, which raises it above its original level, and thus constitutes the supernatural. Surely Christianity, as a strictly supernatural religion, is *à fortiori* the religion of the spiritual; and yet how constantly does the empire of materialistic ideas force its way into the very sanctuary of Christian thought. Let us take one or two leading instances.

2. There is such a thing as a materialized estimate of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not mean merely such a treatment of it as that of Strauss, who strips from the Evangelical narratives every trace of the miraculous, as

so much legend accumulated by the creative imagination of the first Christians around the simple story of the peasant-prophet of Nazareth. And, undoubtedly, Strauss's criticism is as fatal to the moral interest of the fragment which he consents to recognize as the true life of Jesus, as he conceives it to be destructive of the great miracles of Christ, of His Birth of a virgin, of His literal Resurrection from the dead, of His bodily Ascent to Heaven. Nor again do I mean only a refusal to recognize the unrivalled importance of the Life of Jesus Christ in the history of the world. Such a refusal is an intellectual rather than a spiritual error; it is a misconception of the whole current of human history. Who with his eye upon history, upon Europe, upon Christendom, whether he be a Christian or not, can dispute the importance of the Life of Jesus? Without Christ you cannot account for the phenomenon presented by Christendom; you cannot deny the importance of the Life which created Christendom. But it is possible to get much nearer the Truth than this admission, and yet to stand outside it. How many men at the present day conceive of Jesus Christ only as of a Teacher of commanding influence, Who lived in this world eighteen centuries ago, and Whose life has left an impression not merely indelible, but even yet, in some ways, deepening! Recognizing this, they gather up all that can illustrate His appearance among men. The idioms of Eastern speech, the scenery of the lakes and hills of Palestine, the flora, the climate, the customs of the unchanging East, all are summoned by the highest literary skill, that they may place vividly before us the exact circumstances which surrounded the Life of Christ. But here too often the appreciation of that Life really ends. Men learn habitually to think of Christ as of One Who belongs only to human history. They think of Him as of one who lived on the earth eighteen centuries ago, and has passed away.

Where He is now, what He is, whether He can be approached by us, whether He can act upon us, are points from which they either turn away their thoughts, or which perhaps they contemptuously dismiss as belonging to the category of theological abstractions. And if St. Paul were here, whatever else he might say about such students, would he not certainly say this, that they know Christ only after the flesh?

Now, belief in and communion with the Holy Spirit rescues the Life of Christ in the thought of a living Christian from this exclusively historical way of looking at it. For the Holy Spirit perpetually fulfils Christ's promise in the Church and in souls,—"He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you[d]." There are two prominent features in a spiritual estimate of the Life of Jesus. First, the Spirit weans Christian thought from too exclusive an attention to the outward, and concentrates it upon the inward features. It is not, that any thing which can illustrate That precious Life is unimportant, God forbid; but, that the transient circumstances in which it was set are less important than its imperishable spirit and substance. Thus a spiritual estimate of the Life of Jesus concentrates attention upon our Lord's Character as illustrated and sustained by His great miracles. Then it fixes upon the truth which lies beyond, the truth apart from which His Human character forfeits its beauty and becomes a moral deformity; since by that truth alone His constant self-assertion can be morally justified; the truth, I mean, of His literal, absolute Divinity. But a Divine Christ is an Omnipresent Christ. The life which He lived in the flesh, as being a transcript in sensible form of the Eternal Mind, has as such an undying significance. Thus the Life of Christ is trans-

[d] St. John xvi. 14.

ferred by the Spirit from the region of merely historical studies, where it is appreciated only by the natural intelligence, to the region of spiritual experiences, where it speaks directly to the soul. For the Spirit forces in upon us His children the habitual recollection, that Christ is what He was. The interest of His Life is seen to consist in this, that it is the Life of One with Whom we have daily, hourly converse. To the living soul, the Nativity, the Sermon on the Mount, the Last Discourse, the Washing of the Disciples' Feet, the Agony, the Cross, the Resurrection, do not belong only to a distant history from which we are severed by the chasm of eighteen centuries of political, social, and intellectual change. For the pupils of the Spirit those centuries do not exist; the Gospel mysteries are facts, perpetuated independently of their temporal setting, in the kingdom of the Redemption; and year by year, and day by day, we kneel before the Manger, and the Cross, and the empty Sepulchre, as before the mysteries of a kingdom which has its place in time while yet transcending it. For the children of the Spirit the Eternal Christ lives now, not less truly than eighteen hundred years ago. Did He not say, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you[e]"—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world[f]"? And how? Of what kind was this world-enduring presence to be? Politicians are present after death, by the laws or dynasties which they have established. The intellectual survive by the force of the ideas to which they have given currency. The good live yet more nobly by the persuasive beauty of their examples. Nay, the great criminals, who have disgraced humanity, are too often present, energetically present, in the memory and imitation of after-generations. Was the presence of Christ to be of this description?—a presence not of His

[e] St. John xiv. 18. [f] St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Person, but of the natural effects of His historical appearance,—differing in degree, but not in kind, from the posthumous presence of kings and wits, and eminently good or bad characters? No. It was to be a real, but a spiritual Presence. It was not to be, as some Socinianizing theologians have imagined, a presence of the Spirit, substituted for the presence of the Saviour. The Spirit is emphatically the Spirit of Christ, because He is the Minister of Christ's supersensuous Presence. The second Adam is Himself a "quickening Spirit[g]." The promise, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you." is explained by that other promise, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you[h]." Christ is eminently present with us by the presence of His Spirit. We do not see Him, but He has not left us. He is with us invisibly, but as truly as He was in the streets of Jerusalem, or on the shores of the Lake of Galilee; and the children of the Spirit see Him, contemplate Him, cling to Him, as did the disciples of old. The Life of Christ, in short, is of present interest, as being the Life of our once visible but ever living and present Lord; and to fail to perceive this truth, is to be practically ignorant of the effective Presence of the Spirit; it is to have heard to no real purpose whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3. Again, belief in the Holy Ghost rescues us from a merely earthly and materialized estimate of the Christian Church.

The Church of Christ has of course an earthly side. She enters into human history, and her annals are intertwined with those of the kingdoms of this world; nay, more, they have been at times chequered with degradation and crime. She interpenetrates natural society; and she has relations to civil governments, which are matters of

[g] 1 Cor. xv. 45. [h] St. John xvi. 7.

ordinary business and discussion. Her ministers are like other men, in their individual capacity, liable to infirmities and to error, and depending for their usefulness very largely upon their personal character and individual acquirements. Her doctrines are stated in human language; sometimes in the very language which more natural thought has employed in the service of human philosophy. Her Scriptures, at first sight, are like any other book; they are poetry, history, ethics, correspondence. Her Sacraments are, viewed on their outward side, the simplest of rites;—a little water sprinkled on an infant brow;—a little bread and wine dealt out in the early morning to a company of kneeling and silent guests.

Brethren, there are many souls in our day who lack the spiritual sense which enables Christians to see more than this in the Church of Christ. Their eye rests upon the surface. They mistake the kingdom of the Spirit for a merely human organization, patronized by the State in the interests of civil order, education, and philanthropy. They are exclusively concerned with the mere outward trappings of the Church's temporal position, with the exact amount of its political influence in the country, with its relation to the Government of the day, with the incomes of its chief pastors, and their seats in the Legislature;—just as it these precarious accessories of its existing position in England, were of the essence of that world-embracing kingdom, which was set up in the world on the Day of Pentecost. Men speak sometimes as if the loss of these things would be the loss of our all; as if there were no such thing as a Church which was not richly endowed and honourably recognized by the civil authority. Far be it from us to speak unthankfully of the blessings of a national recognition of religion. Yet those blessings may be too dearly purchased by the culpable betrayal of strictly spiritual powers to hands utterly uncommissioned by

Christ, if Cæsar persists in claiming the things of God. And, apart from this, it is easy to see that the whole current of modern legislation is setting steadily, and it may be is presently about to set with accelerated speed, in a direction unfavourable to any State recognition of religion. Is this a reason for despair to those who heartily believe in and love the Church of England, as a true portion of that kingdom which God's Spirit organized eighteen centuries ago, and which, amid all that is human, and sinful, and erroneous, and disappointing in it, He tenants at this moment? No, assuredly. The Church is not a mere material corporation, but a spiritual society. Surely her indefeasible powers would only be put forth with greater energy, when temporal succour was withdrawn; and it may be that she would gain in moral vigour, in clearness of faith, in intensity and unitedness of purpose, what she might have lost in the countenance of the powerful, and in the wealth bequeathed to her by past generations of her children. One thing only need we fear; our own blindness or disloyalty to her true temper and requirements. An infidel writer of the last century observed, that the main hope of a destruction of Christianity throughout Europe lay in the prevalence of two vices among the Christian clergy—ambition and self-indulgence. Oh, most salutary and precious warning! for are not these two vices the most emphatic contradictions of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom; in which self-denial is the soul of all the highest virtue, in which high office means only the liability to a stricter judgment at the great day of reckoning? We have nothing to fear, brethren, for the future, come what may, if only as we live in the Spirit, so also we walk in the Spirit. We have every thing to hope, if in our thoughts about and deeds towards the Church of God, we bear in mind that she is something better worth our labour and our love than any

polity of this world, since we have heard indeed that there is a Holy Ghost Who sanctifies her.

4. Once more, there is such a thing as materialized worship; and this is a danger from which those who believe most earnestly in the realities of the kingdom of the Spirit do not always escape.

That the sense of beauty may be appealed to in order to win the soul to God, is a principle consecrated not merely by the express language, but by the example of Scripture. Look, for instance, at the book of the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah is a great teacher of moral, spiritual, doctrinal truth. But the instrument by which Isaiah expresses his thought is a poetry so beautiful, that mere natural good taste, whether it be religious or not, cannot choose but admire it. It is, of course, possible to read Isaiah only for the sake of his poetry, and to mistake an enthusiastic admiration of his poetry for a spiritual interest in his teaching. But it may be presumed that if the æsthetic attractions of Isaiah's poetry were likely to overshadow, instead of recommending the truth which it enshrined, Isaiah might have been guided to teach the people of Israel in a series of dry propositions, like those of Euclid, whose prosaic uniformity should have effectually repelled any interest whatever of an æsthetic description. It is obvious that whether music, or painting, or poetry, or sculpture, be enlisted in the service of God, the advantages and the risks are the same. It is possible to make each of these arts a handmaid of spiritual truth; it is possible in each case to be so fascinated by the graces of the servant, as to forget the mistress whom she serves.

Now it seems to be the true and generous instinct of an earnest piety to deem no measure of artistic beauty too great for the embellishment of the temples and of the service of Christ. The genuine Christian spirit is not represented as to this matter by the narrow prejudices of

the Puritan tradition. Even in the Catacombs the suffering Church already gave of her best to the Lord Who had bought her, as out of the fulness of her grateful heart. Nor is there any real connexion between spirituality of mind and that particular slovenliness which is sometimes termed 'simplicity,' and which is in too many cases, even now, the leading characteristic of the public services of our churches. But this truth should not blind us to the fact that æsthetic aids to worship may, like other blessings, be perverted, by coming to be regarded more or less in the light of ends. If we find ourselves insensibly getting to attach more importance to the visible symmetry and beauty of the services of the Christian Sanctuary, than to the power which we individually possess of entering into real communion with God, and of offering to Him the best adoration of the various faculties of our souls, we ought to be very anxious. For after all, brethren, the kingdom of the Spirit is the kingdom of the supersensuous. The material beauty with which we surround our approaches to its great Eucharistic mysteries, cannot enhance their real sublimity; but, alas! such beauty can, unless we are on our guard, too easily eclipse it. Let us not neglect outward order, but let our chief care be lavished on grace and truth. Let us give of our best to the churches and the service of our God; but let us ever remember, that since, even in the Realm of the Incarnation, He is a Spirit, they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Surely, to realize the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul, and in the Church, is to be anxious that that communion with God which cannot be uttered in language, should be more constant and fervent; that the inner realities of worship should as far transcend its outward accompaniments, as the kingdom of the Invisible transcends the world of sense. Not to feel this anxiety is to be virtually ignorant of the meaning of the Spirit's Presence; it is

practically not to have heard, at least in one department of our spiritual existence, whether there be any Holy Ghost.

5. Lastly, and above all, let it be remembered that a living belief in the Holy Ghost implies a correspondent elevation of character.

It implies that a man aims at something higher than natural or conventional morality. The difference between natural systems of morality and the ethics of the New Testament is even wider than the difference between natural religion, as it is called, and the dogmatic teaching of St. John. Just as human law aims at nothing beyond the preservation and wellbeing of society, and leaves human conduct practically unfettered, where it does not affect social, but only individual interests; so natural morality proceeds upon the tacit assumption that this world is our all, and that, such being the case, we should make the most of it. It is in this, as distinct from any deeper and higher sense, utilitarian. It lays stress upon those excellences which paganism recognized; upon truthfulness, courage, justice, temperance. It certainly is not to be credited, in fairness, with such unseemly eccentricities as the doctrine which makes man's moral progress to consist chiefly in the development and culture of a healthy animalism; but, on the other hand, taken at its best, it is separated, by a very wide interval, from the moral standard and life set before us in the New Testament.

Certainly, my brethren, before we speak or think disparagingly of natural morality, we do well to ask ourselves how far it may not rebuke us, for falling as far below, as we profess to rise above it. We do well to consider how far the courage, the justice, the severe temperance of heathens, may not rise up in judgment against us, who breathe the atmosphere of the Spirit, and who kneel before the Cross. There is such a thing as

mistaking Christian privileges for Christian attainments; and of imagining that we are what we know we ought to be, simply because we know it.

Let us put the matter in a concrete and homely form. Look at the question of our every-day work, in different positions, here in Oxford. Is not work here too often treated as a matter of taste? Is it not ranged side by side in our minds only with various forms of amusement or with employments which, although admirable in themselves and elsewhere, have not here the first claim on our attention? In short, are we not—I do not say all, but many of us, and many of us, too, who have more or less cause to thank God for teaching us something of the unspeakable importance, and of the real range of His revealed truth—are we not very imperfectly alive to the moral meaning of work, to the moral necessity of work, to the moral dignity, and the moral fruits of work, as work? My brethren, if here I say too much, my words will give no possible umbrage; but if what I say is justified, ought we not to look well to it? It may be true that a great many men who work hard in this place have no higher motive for their efforts than an ambition to make the best of this life; and no Christian would consider that motive a satisfactory or a sufficient one. But there is such a thing as God's Will, expressed by His calling us, in the course of His providence, to the discharge of a particular set of duties; whether manual, or social, or intellectual, it matters not. And a perception of a measure of moral truth far lower than that which is set before us in the New Testament, ought to leave us with no practical doubt whatever as to the moral claims of those duties, that is to say, of work, of our particular work, whatever it may be, in this place.

This, I say, is a simple truth of morals, which a man might master without the teaching of the Holy Ghost.

There are plenty of reasons for paying our bills, and for avoiding gambling, and for economizing time, and for being careful to state the truth, and for keeping clear of those evils which bring, sooner or later, their own punishments. These reasons would have had weight with considerate persons, if there had been no such event at all in the world as that of the Day of Pentecost. Let us not neglect these ethical lessons of nature; but, as we believe in the truth of the Gospel, let us not be content with them. The Eternal Spirit, too, has set up in the world a school of morals; and He whispers within the soul a deeper and purer code than nature dreams of. Look at the contrast between the works of our lower self, animated by the principle of concupiscence, and the fruits of the Spirit, as St. Paul traces them in his Epistle to the Galatians. The fruits of the Spirit, you will observe, are no mere negation of the vigorous forms of wickedness which make up the catalogue of the works of the flesh. They rise higher than this, higher far. They have about them an undemonstrative, passive character, singularly contrasting with the bustling ostentation of natural morals, and implying that, in the school of the Spirit, the soul, like Mary at the feet of Jesus, is listening to a Teacher Who has awed her into the silence which becomes self-knowledge. "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance[1]." How unnatural, men say, they are! Yes! my brethren, they are unnatural; not in the sense of contradicting nature so much as in that of transcending it. It is *not* natural to love God for His own sake, and for God's sake to love man as man; it is not natural to experience an inward sunshine which no outward troubles can overcloud, a serenity of soul which no outward provocations can really ruffle; nor in the face of continuous

[1] Gal. v. 22, 23.

opposition are longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness—natural. Nature prescribes reprisals; for nature is only flesh and blood, and vehement desires, and hot passions, ordinarily controlled only by considerations of social prudence. Leaning upon nature, we may as well despair of getting beyond her as of forcing water to rise permanently above its natural level. But if we will, we may reach a higher standard; since we are not really left to our own resources. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. He does not merely prescribe, He transforms. He is perpetually asserting His presence by His spiritual transformations; He makes the feeble strong, and the melancholy bright, and the cold-blooded fervent, and the irascible gentle, and the uninstructed wise, and the conceited humble, and the timid unflinching. And now, as of old, He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich He hath sent empty away[k]. He has but a scant measure of endowments to bestow on those who find in the things of sense, in the pursuit or worship of wealth, and rank, and reputation, their deepest and most solid satisfaction. He gives Himself most fully to those who ask for Him secretly and often. O blessed gift, so bounteously given in Baptism, and then again and again repeated, of the Spirit of Christ! We seek Him without, and we find Him within us; we seek Him in great assemblies, and find Him in solitude; we seek Him in the understanding, we find Him in the heart. He enters the soul when all the doors of sense are shut; He gives His benediction to each and all of its faculties; "Peace be unto you[l]." The soul hears Him, it sees Him not; the soul feels Him, yet as if insensibly; and His presence is itself that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Henceforth enriched by His indwelling, the soul's desire is to desire nothing, its will to will for nothing, its care to

[k] St. Luke i. 53. [l] St. John xx. 21.

care for nothing, its wealth to possess nothing, out of God, its one, its everlasting Treasure.

Brethren, this is not mysticism; it is the experience of those who have heard within themselves that there is a Holy Ghost. This is the subjective side of lives which have been spent in the purest and most unselfish benevolence, but the secret of whose strength has escaped the notice of ordinary lookers-on. Depend upon it, the kingdom of the Spirit is as near to us as it was to our fathers; and that no changes of human opinion can affect the irrevocable gifts of God. One day, each and all, we shall look back upon its blessed opportunities, upon its high responsibilities, with what feelings of self-reproach or of gratitude, who shall say! Let us be wise while we may. Let us "lay not up for ourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but let us lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal [m]."

[m] St. Matt vi. 19.

SERMON XIII.

THE DIVINE INDWELLING A MOTIVE TO HOLINESS.

1 Cor. iii. 16.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

THIS kind of appeal is very characteristic of St. Paul's rapid turns of thought, and also of his habit of bringing religious convictions to bear sharply and importunately upon religious practice. There are other appeals to the same effect in this very Epistle, and their purpose is obvious.

The Corinthian Christians were guilty of sins both against purity and charity. The popular idolatries of Corinth, aggravated by the commercial and maritime importance of the place, would probably have exposed them to considerable temptations to unclean living; and they had even learned to look with self-complacency upon evils which were not tolerated by heathen opinion. And so little did they understand the love which was due to their brethren in Christ, that they evidently regarded the Church as only another form of political life, with its natural divisions of opinion and its heated passions, and its pervading earthly taint. For both evils the remedial truth is one and the same:—Christians are members of a

society which the Spirit inhabits, because He dwells in them individually, and so has made them collectively the Body of Christ. To the one it is said, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ[a]?" to the other, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

I. Let us consider the fact to which the Apostle appeals; "Ye are the temple of God;" "the Spirit of God dwelleth in you."

1. This is not, first of all, merely a recognition of the presence of God in nature. Doubtless, the sense of God's encompassing, all-pervading life must be one of the main factors in the thought of every thinking man who believes in the existence and spirituality of God. He conceives of God as the Being from Whom it is literally impossible to escape. "Whither shall I go then from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I go then from Thy Presence? if I climb up into heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art there also. If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there also shall Thy Hand lead me; and Thy Right Hand shall hold me[b]."

God, the every where present, enwrapping, upholding, penetrating through and through each creature of His Hand, yet in His Uncreated Essence distinct from all, is before the Psalmist's soul. Man, if he would, cannot be where God is not, cannot place himself outside this all-pervading ubiquity of God. Thus the universe is the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in it. This is the most direct lesson of Psalm civ., which is appointed for this afternoon's service. God is as truly present with the lowest as with the highest forms of life: He is as present with the lowest, and wildest, and fiercest animals, with every variety of tree and plant, with primary rocks,

[a] 1 Cor. vi. 15. [b] Ps. cxxxix. 7–10.

and with slow processes of mineral transformations proceeding through unmeasured ages deep beneath the earth's crust, with heavenly bodies, moving, in their undeviating obedience to law, through trackless space—as with glorified men, as with archangels. He cannot but be thus every where present; He cannot contract His illimitable Being, and make corners in His universe where He is not. And there are not, properly speaking, degrees of His presence, although there are various modes of its manifestation. He is every where, in all the proper intensity and force of His Being, simply because He is God.

2. Yet the Apostle does not mean that the Corinthian Christians were only God's temple as being a part of His universe. For, obviously, man, as man, is differently related to the Divine Omnipresence from any thing else in nature. Man alone can feel it, can acknowledge it, can respond to it. God is just as present with a plant or an animal as with man; but neither animal nor plant is conscious of the Divine contact; both animal and plant offer only the homage of an unconscious obedience to God's law. Man, however, can know and adore his God, by the homage of his intelligence and of his moral freedom; and thus the human soul is a temple of God, in a distinct sense from any of the lower forms of life. It is a living temple, whereof each wall, each pillar, each cornice, nay, the arches and the very floor, are instinct with the life whether of thought or feeling, so designed and proportioned as even by their silent symmetry to show forth their Maker's praise. Such is the original draft of the soul of man; it was to be a true temple of God, nor even in its ruins is it altogether unvisited by Him. The moral and mental life of man among the heathen bears abundant traces of heavenly aid. Not merely because God sustains all mental powers, whether they promote or retard His work and His Glory, but because God is strictly the author of all

good thoughts and truths which heathens have reached, as He is the strength of all natural goodness which heathens have practised. He is the giver of all the gifts which the Greek or the Indian may possess, no less than of the higher and distinct inspirations of Hebrew Prophets and of Christian Apostles. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights[c]."

Yet St. Paul did not mean that the communicants of the Church of Corinth were only God's temple in the same sense as the heathen priests, and philosophers, and prostitutes who thronged the neighbouring temple of Aphrodite. For although God is present to the thought and impulse of all beings whom He sustains in life, so far as to sustain them, He is not present so as to approve and bless, when the powers which He has given are perverted by His creature to the production of that which He hates, and which would, if it were possible, destroy Him. There is a sense, indeed, in which man in his natural sinful state is less properly a temple of God than is irrational nature. For the trees and beasts have done nothing to insult God, nothing to grieve Him, nothing to limit His authority or to defy His will; whereas the soul of fallen man is in a condition of normal contradiction, not to arbitrary rules laid down by God, but to the very essence of His Being, to those constituent moral truths which are rooted in God's eternal self-consciousness, and which—God being what He is—could not be other than as they are. But to those among Adam's children who are alive in Jesus Christ, God manifests His presence by His Spirit; and this manifestation makes them His temples in an altogether intenser sense than is possible for unregenerate man.

3. The presence referred to by the Apostle is not

[c] St. James i. 17.

only the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church. Primarily, indeed, the words imply that truth. "Ye are the temple of God," "the Spirit of God dwelleth in" or "among you." It is indeed in the Church as a whole, and not in the individual, that the full majesty of the Spirit's presence is to be witnessed. The "whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified" by the Spirit, in a deeper sense than any individual can be. In spite of human errors, the sensible tokens of the Spirit's presence fill the whole house wherein, through their successors, Apostles sit to rule and to prophecy until the end of time. In spite of human lukewarmness, tongues of fire, kindling into burning words the soul's consciousness of the sublimest truth, and the rushing mighty wind, endowing a company of feeble peasants with a heaven-sent impulse to save and bless humanity, live on through the ages, not as the monopoly of the recipients of such gifts, but as the appanage and endowment of the holy Body. And there are promises attaching to the Spirit's presence, which the Church, and she alone, can realize. The Church alone, and not the individual; the Church alone, and not any fragment of the Church; not, for instance, even the great Latin Patriarchate, between the tenth and sixteenth centuries, severed already from the East, but not as yet itself further subdivided by the Reformation; only the entire body, acting collectively or by fair and recognized representation, is really warranted in the certainty of guidance into all the truth[d]. And in the same way, of the whole body alone can we say that, through the preserving breath and vital force of the Spirit, it will never fail[e]. Particular Churches, diocesan, national, provincial, patriarchal, may become heretical; entire continents may be lost to Christ for centuries; much more may individuals, the saintliest,

[d] St. John xvi. 13. [e] St. Matt. xvi. 18.

the most gifted, after they have preached to others, themselves become cast away[f]. For as the source of her corporate infallibility, as the conservative force which makes her utter failure impossible, the Divine Spirit is given only to the collective Church; nor do the misunderstandings or the errors whereby man has marred the Spirit's work, imply that the one gift is permanently withdrawn, any more than the losses and divisions of Christendom, or the advances of unbelief, can threaten, however remotely, the guarantees which assure her possession of the other.

Doubtless the Church is the Kingdom, the Home, the Temple of the Spirit; but how? The Spirit governing the Church is not like a human monarch, controlling his subjects, so to speak, as a force above and without them. The Spirit is not only an atmosphere, in which the Church's members move and breathe; He is not any merely external power or influence. The presence of the Spirit in the Church is realized by His presence in the separate souls of her children. He is given without measure to the whole, because He is given in a measure to each. Although He lives in souls because He lives in the Church, yet the collective Church is the Temple of Deity, not as being a vast abstraction, having no relations to concrete and appreciable realities, but because the souls of regenerated Christians, which in their totality compose the Church, are already so many tenements in which the Heavenly Guest vouchsafes to tarry and to bless. And here it is that we touch upon the real groundwork of the Apostle's appeal.

4. The presence upon which he insists is ultimately a presence in the individual. It differs from the presence of the Spirit with saints and prophets under the Jewish Covenant, and still more from the occasional visits which

[f] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

He may have vouchsafed to heathens, in that, so far as the will of the Giver is concerned, it is normal and continuous. "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." No passing visit is here, no sudden but transient illumination, no power, fitfully given and suddenly withdrawn. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people[g]." Such was to be the law of the Messianic Kingdom: each of its subjects was to be gifted with an inward presence of the Holy One.

This presence carries with it the gift of a new nature—the nature of God's sinless Son. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, because He makes us Christ's members[h]. According to the New Testament, His work is not distinct from the work of Christ, as if the work of Christ for man upon earth altogether ended at the Ascension, and that of the Spirit began on the day of Pentecost. On the contrary, the action of the Spirit in the Church is the prolongation of Christ's work into Christian history. It is the extension, it is, with due limitations we may say, the perpetuation of the Incarnation, in its power of making humanity partakers of the Divine Nature. Therefore, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His[i]." Along with this Spirit comes the gift of a new moral being, a new capacity and direction to the affections and the will, a clear perception of truth by the renewed intelligence. "If any man be in Christ, he is the new creation[k]." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes free from the law of sin and death[l]." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance[m]." All this is but the result, the accompaniment of the gift of gifts itself, of the

[g] 2 Cor. vi. 16. Exod. xxxi. 45. Jer. xxxi. 33.
[h] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.
[i] Rom. viii. 9.
[k] 2 Cor. v. 17.
[l] Rom. viii. 2.
[m] Gal. v. 22.

great characteristic gift of the New Covenant, of the Divine indwelling really vouchsafed to each faithful Christian soul. And it becomes us to-day to remember that this gift dates from the morning of the first Christian Pentecost.

II. If we have difficulty in habitually realizing such a truth, it is, I believe, because we fail to do justice in our ordinary thoughts to that higher side of our composite being, which is the seat of the Spirit's Presence within us. Man is not merely a perishing animal gifted with life, a ψυχή: he is an immortal spirit, a πνεῦμα. Our Lord and His Apostles distinguish carefully between the life of the animal human organism, which becomes extinct at death, and the immaterial, indivisible essence, which is indestructible, and which is the seat and scene of the Divine Presence. Thus our Lord excuses the Disciples, when sleeping in the garden of Gethsemane, by drawing this distinction: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak[n]." Thus, at the moment of His death, He commends His own Spirit into the hands of the Father[o]. Here it is obvious that His Spirit cannot be the Divine and Almighty Being; the word must describe a created being needing, in some sense, protection and succour; it stands for that part of Christ's Human Nature Which did not become inanimate at death. Conformably with this, St. Peter speaks of our Lord as having been put to death in the flesh, but quickened in Spirit, in Which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison[p]. Here too Scripture clearly recognizes that which remains of man after death, as a conscious intelligence capable of understanding the Good News of God. St. John alludes to living men as he might speak of disembodied spirits, simply as centres of thought and knowledge: "Every spirit that confesseth

[n] St. Matt. xxvi. 41. [o] St. Luke xxiii. 46. [p] 1 St. Peter iii. 19.

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God[q]." St. Paul gives point to this language by his well-known trichotomy, as it is called, in his First Epistle to the Thessalonians. "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ[r]." Did St. Paul, then, believe that man has a triple and not merely a double nature? Much discussion has been expended upon this question; but it is in reality a question of words. St. Paul's contrast between the flesh and the spirit, in the Epistle to the Galatians and elsewhere, shows that he usually associated the animal life or ψυχή with the animated body; and that he contrasted this merely animal vitality with the living spirit, which is above and distinct from it. A life according to the flesh is a life in which animal vitality and instincts control thought and action; a life according to the spirit is a life ruled by the immortal principle within man, itself renewed and reinforced by the eternal Spirit of God[s]. In like manner, the spiritual man (πνευματικός) is contrasted both with the man of animal life, and with the man of the flesh (ψυχικός or σαρκικός), as being two aspects of the same thing[t]; and St. Paul does not really present us with an analysis of the constitutive parts of human nature, differing from that of his Divine Master.

Now this clear recognition of the distinctness of the human spirit from the animal life of man, which we find in the New Testament, has at certain times been obscured in the popular Christian thought of later days. When the Christian revelation made its way into the world of Græco-Roman ideas, it first of all came into contact with the dualism of Plato, which regarded body and

[q] 1 St. John iv. 3. [r] 1 Thess. v. 23. [s] Gal. v. 16—24
[t] 1 Cor. ii. 14—iii. 4. See as to this Auberlen's art.; "Geist der Menschen," in Herzog's Real-Encycl., vol. iv., p. 732.

soul as distinct substances, and which thus offered to the Christian apologists a convenient philosophical basis for the defence and explanation of their faith. But some of them at least applied the language of Scripture respecting the spirit to the Platonic conception of the soul; and thus the spirit came to be conceived of as a part of the animal soul, or at any rate as the sum of its higher faculties. In the scholastic period the same practical result may be traced to the influence of Aristotle. With Aristotle there is only one real substance, whether it be formalized matter or materialized form. Aristotle's language about the nature of the soul is not consistent with itself; on the whole, he seems to have held that the soul is "the supra-sensible form of the ensouled body[u]." But the Christian revelation was already committed to the soul's immortality; and it was difficult to see how a being could be immortal unless it was an independent substance, an "aliquid quod substat et cui nihil substat." Hence Scholasticism projected the idea of substantial forms,—"formæ substantiales." The conception is not purely Aristotelian, nor is it intrinsically Christian. The soul, thus conceived of, belongs equally to vegetables, to animals, and to men. There were vegetable, animal, and reasonable souls. In man the reasonable soul could only be also the animal soul; the πνεῦμα of Scripture was the ψυχή of Scripture. But if the reasonable soul was also the animal life-principle, why was it any thing more than the life of a plant or of an animal, at a higher point of finish and development; why was it immortal unless they were? It must be admitted, that although

[u] Ritter, Anc. Phil. iii. p. 245. De An. ii. 4. A friend refers me to the passages quoted in Zeller's "Philosophie der Griechen," 2ter Theil, 2te Abth., pp. 234—246, which warrant a higher estimate of Aristotle's psychology than that given above. But Aristotle does not seem to have been consistent with himself.

the idea of the soul, as a reasonable and independent being, created immediately by God, was never lost sight of, its close popular identification with the animal life-principle during long periods of Christian history has supplied arguments against its spiritual essence to the more acute materialists. And the formula, "I think, therefore I am," which has been so fruitful in philosophy, has not been without its indirect services to Christian theology. It has given an experimental base to the revealed representation of a spirit, as of a self-determining being, conscious of its thought and of its freedom, conscious thus of its indivisible oneness, conscious that it is an indestructible seat of personality [x].

It is this truth which the Pentecostal Gift presupposes. That intimate, absorbing, transforming gift of Himself by God, presupposes a recipient, unlike all creatures that merely grow and feel, while they are incapable of reflective thought and of absolutely free self-determination. Man, as an immortal spirit, is the temple of God. But how the Divine Spirit enters into and tenants the human, who shall say? The ideas of extension, of inclusiveness, belong in fact to matter; the Uncreated Essence is as immaterial as the created. But just so far as any one of us bears constantly in mind the immateriality of his real self, can he understand the high privilege to which he is called in Christ. Not, however, that the presence of the Spirit leaves man's lower nature unsanctified and unblessed. The presence of the Spirit, having its seat in the immortal spirit of man, is inseparable from the presence of the Incarnate Christ, Who renews and transforms, by incorporation with Himself, man's lower life of animal instinct and feeling. This sanctification of man's whole being radiates from the sanctification of his inmost

[x] See this traced by G. C. Mayer, art. "Geist," in Wetzer and Welte's Encycl.

self-consciousness, involving the self-dedication to God of that imperishable centre of life, of that "I," which is at the root of all feeling and all thought, which is each man's true, indivisible, inmost self.

III. Let us observe, in the substance of the Apostle's appeal, all the conditions of a really powerful religious motive.

1. Of these the first is, that the truth or fact appealed to should not be an open question in the mind of the person to whom the appeal is made. Not that considerations which are regarded as only probable, or as open to dispute, have no moral weight whatever: they have a great deal of weight in minds which are not balancing between good and evil, but are perplexed by having to decide between opposite courses of conduct, neither of which could fairly be regarded as culpable. But a disputed fact or doctrine is of no use whatever for the purpose of inciting to unwelcome duty or of resisting temptations to welcome gratification. The force and the weapons which may suffice to keep order in the streets of a well-disposed capital would be of little service against a great military enemy, whose cavalry is sweeping all before it in the open country. Indeed, those of us who have been in the habit of watching ourselves at all accurately, must know that the will soon takes alarm at the approach of a motive which is likely to interfere with the attainment of a cherished object; and that at its bidding the intellect becomes particularly acute in discovering and urging objections against the claims of the interfering motive. Therefore the motive which is to resist strong pressure must, if possible, be impregnable: a challenged or discredited thesis will not do the stern work for which a truth, accepted by the understanding as practically axiomatic, is required.

St. Paul's appeal, then, to the inward presence of the Holy Ghost, is of itself conclusive as to the faith of the Church of Corinth. St. Paul wanted, if I may so speak,

all the moral leverage that he could command: nothing would have served his purpose that was not an unquestioned certainty. St. Paul wished by his appeal to bring into the field a power of will sufficiently strong to make head against a large body of perverted opinion, reinforced by two energetic and almost universal passions. He might as well have been silent altogether as have invoked the aid of a precariously-held or controverted doctrine. All half-beliefs give way before strong torrents of social pressure or of personal inclination. If such half-beliefs are to be discussed with any chance of strengthening them, it must be at times when passion has nothing to gain by stunting their growth or by rooting them up. If the idea of an inward Presence in the soul had been a theory of a few refined and speculative minds, or the faith of a small school within the Church having a turn for mystical theology; if it had been any thing else or less than the deep, broad, popular, strong, ineradicable faith of every Christian, as a Christian; it would not have sufficed to bear the strain which is put upon it by this appeal of St. Paul. St. Paul's "Know ye not?" means that his readers had no doubt of the Presence of the Holy Ghost among them and in them; and he appeals to it, as to the shining of the sun in the heavens, as to a fact which among them at least was beyond dispute.

2. A second condition of a strong religious motive, is that it shall rest upon a positive and not upon a merely negative conviction. Not that a negative faith, so to term it, has no power; it has just so much power as is necessary to assert itself. Men have died in the extremity of pain, not only on behalf of what they have believed to be positive truths, but simply as a preferable alternative to acquiescence in what they have accounted falsehoods. Yet the conviction that a creed is false, is only powerful

as a motive to action so long as you are confronted with that creed. When the false creed is out of sight, the conviction of its falsehood has no independent and permanently substantial existence; the existence of the conviction was merely relative, relative to the creed which has now disappeared. This is a point which requires to be insisted on, as men are apt to imagine that the moral force of resistance to a particular creed will be continuously as operative as the resistance itself may have been momentarily vehement. Whereas, in point of fact, every negative conviction has only strength to impel us in one particular direction; and, as a religious motive, it collapses altogether when you lose sight of the enemy who has provoked it into life.

Suppose, for instance, that St. Paul had only insisted upon the social evils of party warfare, or upon the speculative absurdities involved in the cultus of Aphrodite. Party spirit might be a social mischief; but to crush the passions which produce it, you need a strong positive truth. Aphrodite might be a disreputable shadow; but unless something could be done besides demonstrating her nonentity, little would have been gained in this human world for the cause of virtue.

We are justified, not by our rejection of error, but by our acceptance of truth. To accept truth, it may be necessary enough to reject error; but it is truth, positive truth, which illuminates and invigorates the soul of man. To recognize the nonexistence of what is not, cannot do more than clear away obstructions to our real improvement: we are only made better and stronger by what is. St. Paul does not say, Know ye not the moral indefensibility of party spirit, or the religious indefensibility of the popular paganism? He does say, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

3. A third condition of a strong working religious motive is, that it shall rest upon what is felt to be a present truth. Not that the memories of the past or the anticipations of the future are without moral power. The future or the past may be just as certain as the present; but they appeal less directly to the imagination. It has been remarked, that those who profess to unravel the scroll of unfulfilled prophecy with certainty, do not always regulate their worldly concerns in the way which might be expected from their published convictions. It is not that they are insincere; but only that, between the actual present and the approaching future of which they are so certain, various contingencies, as they feel, may arise, upon the effects of which they cannot calculate. All men know that they will die; yet how few seriously prepare for death! All serious Christians believe in the Day of Judgment; yet who among ourselves looks forward to it, in the same practical spirit with which we prepare for the next examination in the schools? The truth is, that the moral importunity of the future is arrested by the imagination, which suggests a variety of intervening contingencies, not contradicting the ultimate result, but modifying the pressure which it ought to exert upon the will, very considerably.

And as with the future, so with the past. The ascertained past is indeed certain: "even the gods," said a heathen, "cannot change the past." But the imagination can rob the past of its legitimate moral power, as easily as it can rob the future. It can lay stress upon all the difference of moral and mental circumstance which separates us from the remote past to which the appeal is made, and which is considerable in proportion to its remoteness. The culture of the historical imagination, as it is termed, has of late years weakened the moral power, while it has enhanced the æsthetic appreciation

of the past. Would the examples of the practical results of faith which are cited in the Epistle to the Hebrews from the Old Testament, have as much weight with an ordinary Christian of to-day as with a Christian in the first century? And if not, why not? Partly, no doubt, because most Christians now-a-days are less in earnest. But partly also because we are more keenly alive to the differences of outward and inward circumstance which separate either the first or the nineteenth century of Christianity from the age of the Patriarchs. Often these differences are extremely exaggerated, especially when the will wishes to rid itself of a troublesome motive. Often it suits us to forget that the Eternal Laws of God's Providences and of man's probation, subsist unchanged amid the largest change of social, moral, intellectual atmospheres. It may be natural to suppose that we should have been heroes in an age of ignorance, and that we are only dilettanti students or workers because we are flooded with knowledge. It may be natural; but it is neither wise nor accurate. Yet such a disposition may illustrate the powerlessness of the past to move us, as contrasted with the present. The life of a St. Boniface, or of a St. Augustine of England, rouses in us a vague sense of curious wonder; but we experience a totally distinct sense of the moral power of Christian example, when we hear of the labours of one who, a few years since, walked our streets, prayed in our chapels, and conversed in our halls and common-rooms with our very selves, and who now, in honourable rivalry with the brightest deeds of faith in bygone days, is winning the Melanesian islanders to Christ.

When St. Paul, then, appeals to a strong motive, he appeals to a present fact. While he works, while they read, Christians *are* the temple of God; the Spirit of God dwells in them. St. Paul does not point to an age of miracle which had toned down during centuries into

an age wherein miracle is "proscribed by invariable law." He is not anticipating a future gift or judgment, of which the present gives no promise or sign. The Day of Pentecost was not to be deemed a day apart; it was merely the first day of the Christian centuries. The tongues of fire might no longer be visible; but the gift which they symbolized would remain. The Spirit, being the Spirit of Christ, had made the life of Christ to be for ever in Christendom, nothing less than a reality of the present. Whatever the past might have been, whatever the future might yet be, one present fact was certain; the Christian knows himself to be a temple of the indwelling Presence. From the moral pressure of this conviction, enforcing activity in good, and resistance to evil, and the constant homage of an inward worship, there is no escape except by a point-blank denial of it.

4. A fourth condition of a strong religious motive is, that it shall appeal to the better side, to the more generous natural impulses of human nature. Doubtless He who made us knows well the moral power of fear; and His revelation certainly contains doctrines and threatenings which excite fear to a point at which it convulses the whole composite life of man. "My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee, and I am afraid of Thy Judgments[y]." This fear of the Lord is often the blessed beginning of spiritual wisdom. But while fear exerts even a revolutionary power for good in the sleeping or diseased soul, it does not maintain the Christian life in its loftiness and fervour so effectively as do more generous motives. A time comes when perfect love casteth out fear. It is true that the passage before us is immediately followed by an appeal to fear: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are[z]."

[y] Ps. cxix. 120. [z] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

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But fear is not the first moral idea which would be suggested to a Christian by the knowledge that he is a temple of God. That knowledge appeals primarily to his generosity. All that goes to form and to sustain among men the virtue of hospitality; all that invests it with the charm it wears alike in the highest and in the lowest civilizations, is called into play by the sense of the presence of a Divine Guest, Who trusts His disarmed Majesty to the chivalry of His subjects. The recollection of a wife and child at home has ere now stayed the hand of a criminal, who would have been reckless if he had had only to think of himself. God commits Himself to us; and thus He throws us back upon our sense of generosity. We are, it may be, like some children at school, who would resist an oppressive discipline to the last, but who are won at once by a confidence so much beyond our deserts. Had the Apostle said, "Know ye not that your prudence or your self-respect should make you peaceable and pure?" human nature would perhaps have muttered that it knew of impulses with which self-respect and prudence cannot compete. But the Apostle points to the Upper Chamber and to the baptistery, and asks, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And Christian faith is silent, as in the presence of a Truth, which love has made morally irresistible.

IV. Lastly, be it remarked that this conviction furnishes the true basis both for the moral training of children, and for real self-improvement in later life.

1. When the doctrine of Baptismal Grace was challenged some years ago, surprise was expressed by some philosophical observers of what was passing, that an abstract question as to whether this or that effect did not follow upon the administration of the Sacrament, could possibly have excited so much strong feeling as

was actually the case. "What can it matter," men said, "whether, when you pour a little water upon the forehead of an infant, it is right to suppose that an invisible miracle does or does not take place?" Now the answer is, that it does matter a great deal. If only the value of our Lord's ordinance and the plain teaching of His Apostles were at stake, if it had been possible to connect no practical interests, as they are called, with this or that settlement of the controversy, a Christian must have felt that it mattered much. But in point of fact, the practical question which was at issue was this;—whether Christian doctrine does or does not supply a working basis for the education of children. For there was no question then, as in truth no question can reasonably be raised by Christians, touching the reality of original sin. The New Testament and the Church are sufficiently explicit in teaching that we are born into this world with a transmitted inheritance of loss, and, in some sense, of ruin certainly attaching to us; and on this point, experience may be invoked with ample effect in aid of the statements of faith. But is a child, after baptism, still without the indwelling Presence; or is it true, that "being by nature the child of wrath," it is hereby made "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," in virtue of a real communication of the Holy Spirit at the administration of the initial Sacrament? The answer to that question is of the utmost practical importance to the moral educator. If the baptized child is in reality still unblessed and unregenerate, still waiting for some future gift of God's transforming and invigorating grace; what right has the moral educator to complain if the child is persistently disobedient, or ill-tempered, or untruthful? The child has a right to say in its secret thoughts to its instructor something of this kind: "On the one hand, you tell me that I am an

unregenerate child, and that until God changes my heart no good can ever come of me. But on the other, you expect me to produce the fruits of goodness, of real energetic goodness; you expect me to be loving, and unselfish, and obedient, and true. Are you not dealing with me in the same way as the Egyptians dealt with the Israelites, when they wished the Israelites to make bricks, yet did not give them straw? Surely this is not just. Of two things one: either I am not all that you mean by unregenerate; or else, you have no right to expect me to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." A child may think a great deal which it cannot put into words, and it is especially likely to be alive to the inconsistency of a religious theory which conflicts with its rudimentary instinct of justice. But if, with the Church, you tell the child, that since its Baptism it is a temple of the Holy One; that by His Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ has made a home in its heart; that it must not be ungrateful to so kind and gracious a Friend; that it *can* obey and be truthful, and respectful, and loving, if it wills, because God enables it to be so; that it must be these things, because else God will leave it to itself;—you appeal to the child's sense both of justice and of generosity. In other words, the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration really supplies the moral leverage which is essential to an effective Christian Education. "I never understood the Church Catechism"—they are the words of a very thoughtful woman—"until I became a mother, and felt that I had to answer to God for the moral training of my children. I do not know how I could have even set to work, unless I had been sure that He was with them; that I could count upon something stronger than any thing I myself could give them; that I could appeal to His Presence and to His gifts."

2. And as with the training of the heart in childhood,

so with the self-education of later life. It may be true, as S. T. Coleridge observes, that motives, or at least that a very conscious and habitual recognition of motives, are "symptoms of weakness," as being "supplements for the deficient energy of the law within us, the living principle[a]." In other words, we do not always go right, in virtue of a predominant instinct which makes right under all circumstances the natural and easy course to us. Certainly we can afford to make—certainly we cannot help making—this confession; and therefore, if motives are symptoms of weakness, they are not on that account to be despised by moral beings who may find it easier to say fine things about a manly or a transcendental system of ethics, as the case may be, than to act up to that knowledge of the Will of God which they actually possess. Do not let us deceive ourselves, dear brethren; we need motives, strong motives, one and all of us. We need them for purposes of action, and for purposes of dogged resistance. We need them, to counteract all that gives way and depresses from within, and to oppose all that would crush our wills into culpable acquiescence from without. A few strong motives, perhaps, are better than many weak ones. A few primal truths, to us clear, indisputable, cogent, again and again examined and proved, and burnished like well-prized weapons, by an admiration which will not tire of handling them, and held up to view ever and anon, that their form and polish may be duly honoured in the sunshine of truth, and then only laid up, where they can be seen by the soul's quick eye, at the moment when they are needed for action;—these are assuredly part of the inner furniture of every Christian who hopes to pass through this world without forfeiting the next. And among these none is better and more serviceable than that of the text—the motive which

[a] Aids to Reflection.

appeals to the sanctity, the responsibility, the powers, the capabilities implied in that Inward Presence of the Eternal Spirit, which is the great gift of the New Covenant between God and man. In moments of moral surprise, in moments of unusual depression, in moments of a felt sense of isolation which threatens to take the heart out of our whole life, in moments of spasmodic daring, when ordinary sanctions have, as it seems, we know not why, lost their hold upon us, it is well to fall back upon the re-assuring, tranquillizing, invigorating resources of such an appeal as that of the Apostle: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Let us emblazon these words, if not on the walls of our churches, as a Whitsun decoration, yet at least within the sanctuary of that inner temple where the All-seeing notes our opportunities for acquiring a clear vision and a firm grasp of truth, and still more the use which we really make of it.

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